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GLIMPSES OF BUDDHIST CULTURE IN INDIA

including four dance dramas

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श्री सुब्रह्मण्यकृतानि नृत्यनाटकानि

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DEDICATED TO

All the Dancers who staged my dance dramas

and

All the Singers who sang my compositions

CONTENTS

Introduction

In presenting this third book of my dance dramas in Sanskrit, I feel both a sense of elation as well as a sense of obligation combined with humility. The former arises out of the general acceptance of my first two books by the artists' community in so far as most of the dramas therein have been staged successfully and acclaimed by critics in India and abroad. There is less need for me to be apologetic and hesitant about continuing my work and even the abridged list of stagings and the summary of press comments I have included elsewhere in this book, is enough to justify some subdued optimism. Indeed the stagings have long since passed the century mark. On the other hand, in terms of my long-term goal of making Buddhist themes accepted in classical music and dance to the extent of including one Buddhist composition in every dance performance and music concert, I have a very long way to go. In that regard, both a sense of obligation and humility are in order. In this connection, there is a need to explain my efforts in the context of my personal life and the socio-historical circumstances leading to the accidental divorce of Buddhism from classical music and dance. In the following pages I go through this exploration in more or less the same way as I did in my first and second book of dance dramas.

To explain my commitment to glorify Buddha through song and dance, I need to explain how the Merciful One was bypassed for centuries in terms of music and conversely, I must

show how breaking the momentum of this self-reinforcing process needed all my thick skin and a nearly Sisyphean commitment. Hence the oscillation between autobiography and history.

With my own passionate love of Carnatic music, I wanted my boy Gautam to take an interest therein and used to sing the Kritis of Tyagaraja and Dikshitar to him and explain their meaning. This meant retelling the stories of Rama, Krishna, Siva and Lalithambika. At the same time as I was deeply committed to Buddha the man, the prophet and philosopher, I would often relate the life of India's greatest son to him. One day, he asked innocently "Daddy, you frequently tell me stories of Buddha but you always sing Kritis on Rama, Krishna or Siva. Sing me a kriti now on Buddha." When I explained that I knew of none and perhaps there was none in fact, he suggested challengingly : "Then, why don't you make some yourself." That set me thinking along two different tracks : why was there so little in the way of musical composition on the Great One and how can I dare to make some suitable song-offerings that would meet some artistic criteria. Let me now try to answer these questions in that order.

Music and Religion

Popular legend in India and the West assumes a close relation between Hindu religion and music from time immemorial. Westerners, drawn to Indian music, assume or accept this for a number of reasons. There is the old folklore about the spirituality of all things Indian. Secondly, Indian plastic art in icons, statues, bronzes and temple carvings is patently concerned with deities and their doings, and thirdly comes the once close association of classical dancing with temples and Devadasis. Fourthly, the subject matter of practically all music (except perhaps Hindi-Urdu Ghazals) concerns Gods, Goddesses and their glories. Fifthly Dr. Ananda Coomaraswamy had emphasized in his pioneering work on Indian art that art is religion and religion is art. Lastly, the majority of Westerners drawn to Indian art, music, yoga or philosophy, have an

initial proclivity to associate art and religion, repelled as they are by their own secular industrial civilization.

All but the last of these characterizations apply to Indian connoisseurs too. In addition, they would like to believe in all the Puranic legends and symbolisms associating religion and music. Therein the Gods are musicians or music lovers : Siva as Dakshinamurthi plays the Veena ; Saraswati is the goddess of Music as of all the arts : Krishna plays the flute and all the world is enraptured ; to watch Siva dance, the Gods gather on Pradosha, and some play on instruments for him ; Vishnu stands rapt where Bhaktas sing, deserting Vaikunta and the hearts of Yogis and Siva pays money to listen to music in Tamil as Saint Sundaramurti describes it. There are many more legends like these. In short, Indian and Western music lovers have reinforced each other's assumptions about the religious origins and associations of music.

These assumptions are largely true, but with an important qualification. The association was not from time immemorial ; it took shape in Tamilnadu about the 6th century after Christ with the Bhakti Movement which grew fast with the help of music and the association was fully entrenched all over Hindu India by the tenth century, by which time Buddhism had disappeared as a separate religion from India.

The early associations of Indian music were essentially with earthly patrons or heavenly boon-giving patrons both in the North and South and not very much with a Supreme Being. In South India, the position was much clearer. Songs were sung by travelling minstrels (Yazhpanar) in praise of the great munificent chieftains (Vallals) and Kings. Songs in praise of the Lord were rare and did not usually preface works of Sangam poety. This was pointed out by late Dr. Mu. Va. and the exceptions cited by his critics later, are far too few to affect his main thesis. Indeed, a particular style or class of poetry evolved because of this patron-orientation, called *Aatruppadai,* in which a lucky recipient of a Vallal's favours describes the way to his palace to another indigent minstrel. It is also interesting to note that (perhaps) the earliest significant work

of Bhakti poetry (on Lord Muruga) called Thiru—Murugatrup-padai, took this form.

Among the Aryans, music was supposed to have originated with Samagana that is, the chanting of Sama Veda. But Agni-hotram Ramanuja Thathachariar has explained how apart from this Sama chanting, several other modes of vocal/instrumental music were part of the longer Yagas. ('Vedam Potrum Geetham' *Kalki special issue*). His descriptions, however, lead me to conclude, that though this music was part of religious rituals, it was essentially "secular" in tone and content in as much as it was sung and played for the pleasure or glory of the Adhvaryu. Samagana itself was more "religious" in "praying" to the Gods, but again some of its highly religious associations, such as (*i*) its appeal to Lord Siva, by which Ravana was able to please him and (*ii*) its identification with Lord Krishna in the *Bhagavad Gita* seem to be later additions. Thus even Vedic singing was somewhat patron-oriented and ritual-oriented.

Some scholars may dispute this characterization but few will disagree with the view that music in later Sanskrit literature came to be more associated with love, princely courts, courtezans and Nagarikas. Udayana, the reputed Veena-playing king was an incurable romantic to boot. The references to Veena and Mridanga in Kalidasa's *Kumara Sambhavam* in his description of Himavan's capital, and in his *Meghadutam*—are generally associated with idle-rich lovers in their terraces and mansions. The Nagarika of Vatsyayana's *Kama Sutra* goes in search of pleasure to courtezans' houses and is entertained by music therein. Sculptures of the period portraying drummers, dancers and Veena players are drawn more from palace scenes. In fact, during the long post-Vedic period in Sanskrit literature or sculpture, one can locate more instances of courtly secular music than of music for the Lord.

I have discussed in detail along with several other learned contributors the secular origins of much of Indian art and the symbiotic relations between the sacred and the secular in my book *The Sacred and The Secular in India's Performing Arts*

(Ashish Publishing House, New Delhi). Our brief discussion here only emphasizes the long secular period of artistic activity before Bhakti.

Buddhism flourished in India mainly during this "secular" period. Its rational approach to philosophy and religion was by itself not friendly to the hypnotizing effects of music and dancing. As a monastic religion it was not favourable to the development of the arts practiced by courtezans and idle-rich Nagarikas. Though a considerable amount of impressive ritual with even pomp and splendour was added to Buddhism gradually, in terms of music, it never got beyond encouraging some chanting and bell-ringing. During its period of decadence and Tantrism, the pleasure-orientation was more coarse and carnal than artistic.

The Bhakti Movement

The intimate association of music, dancing and religion was mainly the result of the Bhakti Movement in Tamilnadu from the sixth century. In fact, it might have started in a small way earlier, if we rely on inferences from the poetry of Karaikal Ammayar, and the Devarams of Appar and Sambandar. In *Manimekhalai*, dancing and music are treated essentially as sensuous activities. They are implied as sensuous in the earlier part of *Silappadikaram* but in the last part, song and dance in praise of Krishna in Aychiar Kuravai have taken on a devotional colour. Moreover, different dances are attributed to different gods. But it is Karaikal Ammayar who admires, encourages and warns dancing Siva, a clear indication that dance had graduated into a fully divine activity. There are, of course, references in earlier literature to (drunk) worshippers dancing as if possessed but Karaikal attributed it clearly to the Great Lord himself. Appar and Sambandar refer to dancing beauties who might have been attached to temples. Thus an association was fast emerging between dance and music and temple and deity.

The association was made more intimate and complete by the Saivite four (Appar, Sambandar, Sundarar and Manicka-

vacagar) and the Vaisnnavite twelve (Alwars) devotees through a historic psycho-social transformation. Appar's younger contemporary Sambandar, established a relation between hymns and musical modes accompanied as he was by the Yazh player Neelakanta who played his Devarams on the yazh as and when they were composed. At the same time, this definite association of a Pann with each Padigam (group of ten poems) was also firmly established. The Saivite singers began to refer to Siva as a passionate connoisseur of music in addition to his dancing, and then took a step further and described him clearly as a musician par excellence as Veenadhara Dakshinamurti. The Vaishnavite Alwars, not to be outdone, described Krishna as the divine flute-player casting a spell over the world. The evolution was now complete, and music and dancing became thoroughly integrated with religion in South India.

We will refer most briefly to the historic pyscho-social transformation that placed Bhakti as a central factor of Indian society. The Alwars mainly transmuted the once virile Tamil secular romantic literary tradition "Ahattinai" into intense emotional Bhakti, identifying the Lord as the great lover. The Nayanars took over the secular Aatruppadai genre of poetry and transformed the temple deity into a generous royal patron. Both these transformations along with the Agamas, legitimised all forms of music and dance as 'Rajopachara' to the deity. It was this total psycho-social transformation that entrenched the relation between Bhakti and the performing arts. I have elaborated all this in detail in my two books *Cultural Integration in India* (1978) and *The Sacred and the Secular in India's Performing Arts* (1980) (both published by Ashish Publishing House, New Delhi), which may be consulted by the inquiring reader.

It is hard to say which helped which—which enriched which ; whether it was the emotional intensity of Bhakti which drew music closer to religion and enriched it or whether music by its charms, helped the spread of the Bhakti Movement. It was a two-way transaction. The Saivite devotional Devarams were always sung in Panns and this helped the spread of Siva Bhakti, quite apart from the later royal patro-

nage of the Chola and Pandya monarchs. Conversely, the association of intense emotion that was Bhakti, brought more Bhava into music and enriched existing Ragas.

Buddhism missed out completely on this new development. In terms of sculpture and architecture, Buddhism reaped a rich harvest as its expansive missionary period coincided with the efflorescence of Indian cave architecture and stone sculpture leading to the adaptation of these forms in the rest of Asia. All this made Buddha the most sculpted prophet in world history, though he just missed out on the great efflorescence of (Chola) bronze casting. In contrast, musically, he was almost completely bypassed. So here was my opportunity to fill the gap of centuries or was it ?

Dance and Drama, and the decadent art of composing

In fact, I discovered quickly that it was far less easy to do it than appeared at first sight, mainly because musical composition as an art seemed in a sense, thoroughly exhausted. Secondly, there were special difficulties in treating the Buddha theme on the stage. The latter became clearer in the course of a conversation with Smt. Rukmini Devi of Kalakshetra. As I was explaining my efforts to bring the Buddha theme into dance and song, she explained her difficulties, in presenting Buddha's story on stage. In particular, she was referring to the problems she met, in presenting some aspect of Yashodhara (Buddha's wife) with an English script read by Doctor Arundale. I glibly remarked that one cannot possibly make a dance theme of the life a great monk Buddha, written by another monk-poet Aswagosha. One must keep Buddha a presence and an influence on the stage and not a regular character, and develop the characters of women who played a part in his life. "I would ignore Edwin Arnold and push into the background the majestic Aswagosha—and go back to the Nikayas to bring out the glory of these women characters" ; I said.

I do not think Smt. Rukmini Devi remembers the conversation or my apparently frivolous remarks about how to

put on stage Buddhist themes as dance-dramas. But I considered my off-the-cuff remarks a challenge to myself and started exploring ways of composing musical dance-dramas on women who played an important part in Buddha's life.

The direction and format I finally chose proved to be mentally rewarding to me in many ways. In the first place I chose Carnatic music and Sanskrit for a combination of majesty and suggestiveness. Efforts to introduce the western integral ballet technique into the Indian stage (by artists like Uday Shankar) have failed one way or the other. The repetitive or suggestive background instrumental music of the Western ballet, without words, is a natural offshoot of Western talent for orchestration and a Western audience is in many ways attuned to read emotional meanings into the rise and fall of volume and pitch and change of speed and similar techniques. The best connoisseurs in India, while attributing moods, seasons and times of the day to abstract Ragas, need clearly worded songs with their special Dhatu and rythm pattern to be interpreted by a dancer as a theme or a story. Again, an individualistic interpretation by the face, limbs and feet of a dancer goes well with an Indian composition in words, whereas the group-integral interpretation (without a traditional vocabulary of Mudras) of Western ballet, made even more "integral" by reformers like Martha Graham goes well with wordless orchestrated background music. In short, a dance drama for the Indian stage needs to use the rich time-honoured resources of the Indian stage and music, namely compositions with Dhatu and Matu suited to dancing feet as well as the concert, with their own special rythmic patterns. The Kriti, Padam, Tillana and Javali have become more rather than less significant with time, for the dance-drama anyway.

In regard to the construction of the drama, however, I was influenced more by Western, that is, the old Greek concern for emotional conflict, which I planned to elaborate mainly through a single woman character in my first five dance dramas. This would also bring out the influence of Lord Buddha, on and through, that particular woman.

For this purpose, I picked out five great women who played a part in Buddha's life and were in return transformed by him. It seemed a good idea to build one dance drama each, round each one of them. The drama thus concentrates on bringing out the mental transformation of one woman through the influence of the Buddha. The transformation itself starts with an initial conflict thus making room for the Western (Greek) techniques of dramatic intensity to be used to enrich the action.

We will pass over briefly the essential action of my first five dance dramas included in my book *Pancha Kanya Tarangini*. In all of them I have used the conflict-transformation syndrome and in all of them I have changed the original Nikaya story substantially to suit my artistic purposes. Thus in the original Ambapali story, her conversion is slow and gradual—but in my story it is based on an imaginary head—on collision with the Great One, subsequent mental agony and transformation. In Yashodhara, I have broadly followed tradition but the detailed resolution of mental conflict by Yasodhara who finally accepts that Buddha belongs to the world, is handled in my own way. In Sujata, I have enriched the rather thin story of milk-giving by bringing in a gypsy and changing it into a colourful *Kuravanji* dance-drama, using the gypsy to predict the glories of Buddhism. In Mayaprajavati, I try to make the final acceptance of women into the Sangha by the Buddha more convincing, by inserting the incident of the agnostic young belle, who shames the priestly Brahmin and the leading disciples of Buddha by her fearless scepticism. In Maya, I have added dynamic action to a simple story of childbirth, by Maya experiencing the glories of two Jataka stories namely the Mruga jataka and Sasa Jataka told by her friends in Lumbini. Thus in all these five cases, I have placed poetic beauty and dramatic intensity well above historical truth or even the Buddhist Nikaya literary tradition. I have rejected parts of it, added to it and changed it to make the drama my own in content and dramatic intensity.

I have adopted more of the same confidently creative and artistically assertive approach in my second book of four

dance-dramas entitled *Vira Kanya Vahini* dealing with four heroic women in Buddhist history and legend who promoted the spread of Buddhism. Instead of a single woman occupying the centre of the stage and undergoing mental conflict and transformation as in my *Pancha Kanya Tarangini*—in this book, the conflict is more externalized and concretized as a mild or head-on collision between a hero and heroine with the latter converting the former to her viewpoint. This essentially Western approach is necessary to elevate just rythmic dance (Nrutta) and interpretation (Abhinaya) collectively to the level of (dance) drama. I would like to believe that I have done it without sacrificing the essential elements of Indian classical dance in any way.

The stories, while based on some historical foundation are largely or totally my creations, to subserve the ends of dramatic intensification. Thus historically Asoka spreads Buddhism through missions and inscriptions and his daughter Sanghamitra is reputed to have helped her father in taking the faith to Sri Lanka. Legends add something about Asoka's title as Uttama Dayaka—and the influence of a leading Bhikku in inducing him to gift his daughter to missionary work. These piecemeal legends will not make a drama of conflict. In my Sanghamitra the first scene witnesses a father-daughter collision after Asoka's Kalinga victory, with the daughter accusing the father of mindless cruelty. In the second scene, Asoka the Buddhist is listless and is made dynamic by visions of missionary conquest. In the third the daughter forces a fond and smug Asoka to gift her to the Sangha. None of the three events can be traced in that manner to history and even legend, though there is legendary basis for the first. In Vasavadatta, I have totally rejected the traditional original story in which Upagupta waits to help Vasavadatta till she is trapped and then glorifies his own compassion—as unworthy of Buddhist ethic—mainly due to a discussion with a Japanese ballerina. Instead I have turned the story upside down to make Upagupta bow down to Vasavadatta as his Guru. The story of Krishnaveni is entirely my creation without any historical evidence—except that the rival Gandhara and Mathura images

of Buddha were created broadly during that period with the latter school dominating all Buddhist sculpture for centuries later through its canons of stylization and spiritual beauty. As a lover of the Mathura tradition, I have created Krishnaveni in my image, searching for the perfect spiritual Buddha and finding it in the Mathura statue. In Rajyasri the historical background is preserved, but in terms of dramatic interest, the concentration is on how Rajyasri, foresaw the decadence of imperial unification and the need for Buddhism to penetrate Hinduism deeply to survive through it indirectly. There is no historical evidence for this—and the detailed history as told in Dr. Devahuti's *Harsha* is too complex for any artistic treatment. What I have preserved and used is the historical background alone and not historical detail in any of the four dance dramas.

In this third book, I go back but only partly to the pattern of my first book *Pancha Kanya Tarangini* in so far as a single woman occupies the centre of the stage in the first two dance dramas. However, there is a clear man-woman confrontation in "Prabuddha Mekhaleeyam" and even "Parimala Madhaveeyam" is not so much one-woman centred as my earlier ones. In the other two dance dramas, "Khemanguli maleeyam" uses a powerful man-woman confrontation while "Mahakanya Sanga Natakam" is an imaginary creation of mine to pose a basic dilemma of Buddhism.

The first two dance dramas derive inspiration from the two most famous Tamil epics, *Silappadikaram* of Ilango Adigal and *Manimekhalai* of Sattanar. Both these epics have a strong Buddhist orientation and are referred to frequently as twin epics. There is some debate about their dates, some placing them in the early post-Sangam period and some others attributing a much later date near the seventh or eighth century. Some have cast doubt on whether they are twin epics at all but internal evidence seems to suggest that they are. Indeed the authors seem to have been friends and the more famous *Silappadikaram* seems to have been composed *after Manimekhalai*. Both epics have been read and admired for centuries for their high asethetic value and in addition they

are useful to researchers for other purposes as well. In particular, *Silappadikaram* contains most of the information we now have, about the dance and music of those times in Tamil Nadu, while *Manimekhalai* gives us a contemporary picture of the various philosophical systems that were discussed in those days.

The Buddhist inspiration of these two epics is far too clear for any dispute but their structure and style are quite different from Sanskrit Buddhist epics such as *Buddha Charitam* and *Soundaranandam*. They reflect the contemporary compromises between Tamil and Buddhist influences. The intense secular romanticism and nature-descriptions of Sangam Tamil literature had to be reconciled with the other-worldliness of Buddhism and each epic does it in its own way. *Manikekhalai* is more straightforwardly Buddhist and Tamil literary influences are seen more in the side-stories and festival-descriptions. *Silappadikaram* starts with Tamil notions of love, marriage, courtezans and stresses the power of fate and the power of chastity towards the end while Buddhist notions are secreted in the interstices along with burgeoning Hindu notions of Bhakti.

This account tries to give only the briefest socio-historical background to both these Tamil epics. It is presumed that readers are acquainted with the general outline of these epics. On this basis. I would like to show what I have borrowed from them, wherein I have rejected their material and how far I am totally original. In regard to my dance drama *Parimala Madhaveeyam*, I have taken the characters of Madhavi and Gopala (Kovalan) and have bypassed most of the story of *Silappadikaram* or pushed it into the background. The reason for this somewhat aggressive originality is that Ilango's story, supremely beautiful in itself, does not have enough Buddhist content and emphasis for my purpose and in popular understanding, it is altogether a glorification of the chaste wife Kannagi to the exclusion of all other themes. My story virtually banishes Kannagi from the mainstream of events and even Gopala (Kovalan) is just a foil to Madhavi. It deals

essentially with the development of Madhavi from a complete artist to an incomplete nun and thus combines two things I want to combine, namely dance and a Buddhist theme. Madhavi's debut or Arangetram is treated totally differently from Ilango's. Madhavi's teacher praises her abundant talent and warns her against over-identification with a part or emotion telling her how even the great Urvasi fell a victim to it. Madhavi's main item in her performance is playing the part of Rukmini in Rukmini Kalyanam—waiting for Lord Gopala to carry her away. She interprets her part so well that Gopala (Kovalan) in the audience walks over to the stage showering praise on her and Madhavi overidentifying as Rukmini garlands him considering him as Lord Gopala. The shocked teacher and mother curse her with the loss of her art and loss of her lover respectively. The defiant Madhavi walks away with Gopala. A Bauddha Bhikku wishes her good luck.

My total recreation of the Arangetram story serves two purposes. It provides a dramatic reason for Madhavi's suffering—as based on these curses. Equally importantly, it brings in the two well known Hindu stories of Urvasi's infatuation for Pruravas and Rukmini's love and abduction, thus providing a bridge with Hindu legends—to evoke interest in the less known Buddhist theme through the well known Hindu legend. This technique has been adopted by Aswagosha in several places in *Buddha Charitam*, comparing Suddhodana's happiness on the birth of Siddharta Gotama with Lord Siva's on the birth of Shanmukha or Gotama's leaving the palace with Rama's going to the forest and it was used by Ilango himself in his frequent references to the dance of the Hindu Gods, to Madhavi's performance of Kodu Kotti and to the milkmaids' performance of Aychiar kuravai in praise of Krishna. I have used this already well-sanctified technique in my own way for my own purposes.

Similarly, in the second scene, during the Indra festival, Madhavi dances the Tripura dahana dance of Lord Siva (known in Tamil as Kodu Kotti) at the request of citizens. The same Bhikku who wishes her well appears again and asks

her to dance Buddha's victory over Mara. When Madhavi says she was never taught that, the Bhikku tells the story of how Siva invented 'Abhinaya' first (according to Kohala's commentary on Natya Sastra) ; how when Narada sang the story of Tripura dahana, he was so absorbed that he automatically interpreted it with gestures and thus added Abhinaya to Nrutta. Madhavi follows this and interprets Mara Vijayam as the Bhikku sings the story. Gopala becomes jealous at the end of it and tells her that her art should belong to him alone. Madhavi answers that art is for all and they part company. In the third scene, a regretful Madhavi receives with a shock the news of Gopala's death. In the fourth scene, she receives advice about her future; from her mother to continue to dance: from a Vaishnavite to devote it to Vishnu Bhakti themes, from Bhikku Sravana to become a nun and from Bhikku Kalananda to devote it to Buddhist themes. Madhavi takes that advice but would do it through her students.

In short I have taken the well known character of Madhavi and built my own theme round her with a Buddhist interest, retaining the barest outline of the old story. In *Prabuddha Mekhaleeyam*, there was no need to introduce or enhance a Buddhist interest which was already there aplenty. But ruthless pruning of the epic's story and an intensification of the conflict was necessary to make it a proper dance drama. In Sattanar's epic, the main theme of the frustrated love of prince Udayakumara for Manimekhalai is diluted heavily by every available side-story and to cap this, Sattanar devotes a long chapter (Gatha) to her disputations with Pandits of all philosophical persuasions. All this makes the epic a mine of information on contemporary society and customs and various philosophies. It has a wandering beauty of its own but it will not do for an intense dance drama.

In my story, I have therefore concentrated totally on how Udayakumara out of his infatuation, chases her fruitlessly and I have cut out the supernatural element (except Manikekhalai's visit to Nagadvipa by air) and of course all the side-stories. I have also shown her as mellowing more slowly

and also in love with the prince. When he is murdered, she then becomes totally devoted to a life of Buddhist preaching not by disputation as in the original epic but by enacting Buddha's story in song and dance. Here again dance and a Buddhist theme are harmonized through some modifications and rearrangement of the epic story along with ruthless pruning.

The third dance drama on Angulimala is largely my creation. In Buddhist legends, Angulimala the dacoit chief who cuts off the fingers of those he robs, is converted by one of Buddha's male disciples. In my dance drama, I portray him as a sort of Robin Hood and introduce a powerful confrontation between him and the noble queen Khema. This is more in the style of the confrontations in *Veera Kanya Vahini*, but more intense. The last dance drama tries to right the wrong done to Ananda in the first Maha Sangha, poetically.

It is on record that Ananda (who was nearest to the Great One during his last twenty years) was poorly treated at this first meeting of the disciples called Maha Sangha. More specifically, the austere disciples led by Upali humiliated him apparently as less austere, though they had to rely heavily on his memory for collecting Buddha's words. I have pictured this as a conflict between those like Upali who stressed the rationality of Buddha's teachings including his path of sense control and those like Ananda who emphasized his compassion. Frustrated Ananda complains about this to Gotami, Buddha's foster-mother who agrees with him in glorifying compassion. She then calls to witness by her yogic power, the women who knew his compassion, namely Maya (his mother), Yasodhara (his wife), Sujata, Ambapali and Khema. This rival Sangha of Mahakanyas gives equal importance to compassion and rationality and predicts the glories of Buddhism in both regards. This drama is oriented towards partly resolving the dilemma between the two faces of Buddha's teachings and rehabilitating Ananda.

I have explained sufficiently my mode of handling the dramatic medium, as a blend of Western emphasis on conflict

and its resolution, the traditional techniques of Sanskrit drama with its message, and an exercise of my poetic licence to change the original stories for aesthetic and dramatic purposes. I need now to say a few words about the art of (Carnatic) musical composition in general and in the particular context of my dance dramas.

The Decadence of the art of Composition

In the glorious period of the Classical Trinity and of Swati Tirunal, the Kriti served many more purposes than a composition in Western music or for that matter a Kriti does now in South India. Carnatic musicology had taken giant strides in the 17th and 18th centuries, and the increasing wealth of Ragas and Tala patterns had to be preserved and transmitted to future generations in crisp and less unwiedly forms than through the earlier Prabhandha patterns. Music had gone far ahead of the Raga-Tala fixed combinations in the Panns of Devaram and the repetitive music of Astapadis ; the Padam was too set and even in tempo : the Devarnama with its own beauty was still limited while the encyclopaedic Prabandha was cumbersome. The vitamin pill of the Kriti (as Dr. V. Raghavan aptly calls it) was evolving somewhat slowly when Tyagaraja, Jupiter-like conceived it in its fullness and gave finished form to this Minerva—using fewer words, using the contemporary Pallavi as a model to give variations and making several different Kritis in a major Raga to explore its varying graces. Dikshitar treated the Kriti somewhat differently in stressing the flowing Raga through a combined Dhrupad-Alap style and Syama Sastri through complex Raga rhythm combinations. Swati Tirunal used a richer Sanskrit vocabulary and more variations in style. But for all the four of them, the Kriti served at least three major purposes at the same time : it was an exposition preserving the fine and important sancharas of a Raga ; it was a planned marriage of the Ragabhava to a certain Talagathi to make the marriage last, and thirdly, it was a good emotional outpouring with a prosody considerably different from that of pure poetic forms.

Of these purposes, the first was so well and truly served by

the Trinity and Swati Tirunal that little was left to the later composers. Many of them, did complain, about it saying that "Tyagu has left little for us to do." Creating or taking up new Ragas gets over the boredom of covering the same ground but does not always make an impression. Some succeed but many fail for a simple reason. It is not forbiddingly difficult to look up a new scale, straight or crooked and make a Raga of it by choosing significant phrases, but it needs the approval of at least one generation of connoisseurs to give it a personality. Hence infant mortality is very high among newly made Ragas. All in all, the first purpose of preserving a Raga or an aspect of it through a Kriti has been exhausted by the great ones of the last century.

The second and third purposes are more important now as there is little that is new to say in the Rakti or even Apurva Ragas. Indeed, even the second purpose may be getting exhausted but the third is still wide open. One is reminded of the late T.K.C.'s satirical characterisation of some singers and composers who regard the Kriti as a coat-stand of meaningless words to hang the coat of Raga and Tala on. That just will not do even for a composer who is an advanced musicologist. Carnatic composition cannot, of course, stand without an existing Raga foundation but the composer can express his original personality now, only through a new subject matter, even more through new explorations in suggestive expression and still more through new experiments in musico-prosody. In all these regards I do claim inventiveness, exhilaration and enthusiasm while I make no claims to originality in musical composition as such.

The composer of dance-dramas has in this regard greater freedom than a composer of concert songs, which are judged almost purely on their musical structure. Dance compositions, particularly in a dance drama, can explore greater variety than pure set compositions like Varnam and Padam. The sahitya or the pattern of meaning is more important for dance interpretation and so are tala gatis or rhythm variations. I have used these freedoms and opportunities fully in my dance compositions.

Thanks Giving

Of several people who triggered off this exploration, I have already mentioned my boy. I would like to single out some others from so many who have cheered me all along. The late Professor Sambamurthy encouraged me with appreciation more than once ; my sister-in-law Smt. Rohini Rao, was the first to learn some of my compositions and sing them back to me. This was an important experience, for no composition really takes on life till some one other than the composer takes it up. The experience is both stimulating and broadening and spurs on the composer into more variety.

But more than all the others it was Smt. Hema Sampath (an A.I.R. artist) who learnt most of my compositions, patiently and persistently, adorned them artistically and elaborated them enthusiastically. Without her continuous help, I would have felt more lonely in the Sisyphian task of glorifying in music, the most sculpted and least sung Lion of the Sakyas.

Nearly as much as Hema, Smt. Mallika Mahadevan of Detroit was responsible for musically sustaining two of my longer Sanskrit dance dramas, Ambapali and Sujata in North America. My special thanks go to Mrs. Rajeshwari Chandrasekhar who notated several songs of mine for publication—and to Rashmi Venkateswaran and Dr. B. Raman, who learnt and sang my songs for performances in Canada.

I have listed the dancers who choreographed and staged my work separately and my special thanks and greetings to every one of them who has helped me in the noble and uphill task of putting Buddhist themes on the stage.

Lastly and less than modestly, I must stake my claim as a pioneer.

Aswagosha's Sanskirt drama *Sariputta Frakarana* was staged perhaps in Peshawar during Kanishka's reign in the first century after Christ. Thereafter there is no well known

record of such a work in the performing arts with a Buddhist content as such in Sanskrit except Harsha's Nagananda. There must have been quite a few, we do not know about. Of course, the Jains kept up a vigorous creative tradition in Sanskrit for centuries though without much musical association.

Buddhistic creative works in the performing arts were perhaps done in regional languages. Indeed Tamil could boast of a few Kavyas—not unrelated to drama. *Manimekhalai and Silappadikaram* will always bear testinomy to that (strange) marriage between intense sensuous creativity and Buddhistic themes. They themselves were not plays as such nor dance dramas nor musically chanted or sung, as far as we know but we owe most of our information on the music and dance of that period to them.

After a long interval of relative ignorance about Buddhism, Hindu interest revived in the last century mainly through Western rediscovery of India's greatest Son. But the creative work that it sparked off inside India was essentially poetic without intimate musical content. Thus Desika Vinayagam Pillais' poetry on some incidents in his life in Tamil, Kumaran Asan's *Karuna* in Malayalam and even Karant's plays in Kannada are not basically constructed in any musical mode or rythm though they can be sung when set to simple music. Tagore's dramas, like *Chandalika* were essentially set to rather fairly simple music right from the start. Few others have followed his example, however.

Against this general background, I do humbly claim to have started my dance dramas on Buddha right from the beginning as essentially musical creations. The prosody of Carnatic musical forms such as Kriti, Javali, Tillana or Padam is different from that of poetry as such—and my songs in these forms have naturally adopted the prosody of Sangita Kavitha integrally from the start. Every song was thus conceived with its music or *Dhatu* and words or *Matu* together in one piece in all cases. There was never any question of setting a song later to music in some Raga and some Tala. I may add

that I do not like anyone else setting my songs to music. I was clearly assured by late Professor P. Sambamurthy in a letter that mine was the first pure musical creation in musical forms such as Kritis and Tillanas on Lord Buddha in Carnatic music.

Being first is neither good nor bad as such. But I hope to persist in creating more and more on Buddhist themes in music and dance. I may already claim to have put most of my dance dramas on stage several times and hope to put more on.

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SOME NOTES FOR THE READER AND THE PERFORMER

The Sanskrit text of the songs is given here without any musical notation. Those who want to learn the individual songs or dancers who want to learn a whole drama, can always obtain recorded tapes from either the author or Mrs. Hema Sampath, C/o Mr. A. Sampath, at their respective addresses. The songs were all conceived integrally with their sahitya and Raga-Tala together and any alteration thereof would not be aesthetically desirable. In due course a musically notated edition may be brought out but in the meanwhile recourse to recorded tapes and casettes is the best mode of learning these songs. As usual, the name of the Raga is given at the left top corner above each song and that of the Tala on the right top corner.

Few full stops are used for sentences in Sanskrit songs, for a simple reason. In each Carnatic musical composition, usually, there is only one sentence, that is usually the Pallavi or the burden of the song. Each other part (*e.g.*) Anupallavi or Charanam is not a complete sentence but is formed of adjectival or adverbial phrases which are added on to the Pallavi in singing to make a complete sentence. However, outside of songs is used as a full stop in prose sentences.

An apology for the un-English translation is in order. A near literal translation does violence to idiomatic English but can be defended on the ground that it helps the dancer interpret each line, even each phrase clearly and separately for Abhinaya. Again, the more literal translation also follows the structure of the Carnatic musical composition, more closely. The earlier remarks about sentences apply to the English translation also. Only the Pallavi usually constitutes a sentence. But some stops are used for the other parts for convenience.

I have generally stuck to the rules of Sanskrit grammar but for occasional liberties, for musical effect. I hope to be forgiven for these and other shortcomings and I salute all those singers and performers who would glorify Lord Buddha through my songs and dance-dramas.

परिमलमाधवीयम्

The Story of Madhavi, the Fragrant (the famous)

A dance drama by V. Subramaniam

This dance drama turns the well-known story of the Tamil epic, *Silappadikaram*, upside down as it were. Herein, Madhavi totally displaces Kannagi as the heroine and in fact Kannagi is barely mentioned ever in this dance drama. Instead Madhavi occupies the centre of the stage, grows from a brilliant dancer into a passionate and devoted mistress and finally from a frustrated and deserted mother into a flaming Bhikkuni.

This mode of creative rewriting to the point of reversing the theme, needs no justification as such. The product must be judged purely on its artistic merits in terms of stage performance and internal aesthetic harmony. I may, however, offer some justification with precedents from the Indian and, in particular, Tamil literary tradition itself. The stories from Ramayana and Mahabharata have been suitably modified over the centuries by dramatists, of which practice Kalidasa's *Abhijnana Sakuntalam* is the best example. Indeed his predecessors Bhasa and Soumilla did the same. Jain writers have, of course, gone much further in reversing the stories and their moral from *Ramayana* as well as Mahabharata—to the extent of downgrading Avatars like Krishna—and equating the victorious Gods and their mighty foes, the demons as simply Narayanas and Prati-Narayanas. The original stories were thus taken as they were well known and established in the popular mind, and then they were suitably changed to

subserve propagandist religious purposes, even as they were by Kalidasa, Bhasa and Soumilla for aesthetic and dramatic purposes.

In the case of *Silappadikaram*, the doyen of Tamil researchers, Vyapuri Pillai has shown how the main story of Kannagi-Madhavi and Kovalan had been prevalent in varying versions among the Tamil people at large and how Saint Ilango solidified and beautified his own version with astounding artistic ability. Because of its unquestioned artistic merit, as well as its moral grandeur in glorifying the chaste and devoted wife, the Ilango version found acceptance for centuries as *the version* of the story. But that does not in any way forbid any other artist creating his own version for his purpose. This dance drama takes the frustration of Madhavi the peerless artist as the basis of dramatic action with her conversion to Buddhism forming the climax. The story also combines a basic element from Greek tragedy with the Hindu theory of Karma—that the prediction of an evil consequence by itself does not ward it off.

In the first scene, Madhavi as the peerless and perfect devotee of the art of dance gets ready for her debut or Arangetram and is warned by her teacher and mother about the pitfalls of overidentification with any part one is taking or any emotion one is expressing. The former tells the story of how Urvasi, the greatest divine dancer, was in love with King Pruravas—and took the part of Lakshmi in the drama *Lakshmi swayamvaram* conducted by Sage Bharata. She was so deeply engrossed in her emotion of love that in the actual performance, when asked whom she would choose, she blurted out "Pruravas", and as a result was cursed by the sage to become a human's wife and mother. After that warning Madhavi interprets the role of Rukmini in Rukmini Kalyanam, in the course of her Arangetram. As the lovelorn Rukmini, she prays to Gauri to grant her Lord Krishna as her husband and waits for him to abduct her, before her arranged marriage to King Sisupala. As she enacts her eager waiting, Kovalan, admiring her performance walks over to the stage to praise

her. Madhavi (as Rukmini) lost in her part mistakes him for Lord Krishna and garlands him. Her teacher and her mother immediately curse her, with the loss of her art and the loss of her lover respectively. Madhavi defiantly walks away with Kovalan.

In the second scene, they are both taking part in the Indra festival, and Madhavi is invited by the people to dance Siva's burning of the three cities (Tripuradahana). Her performance is appreciated by the whole audience including a Bouddha Bhikku named Kalananda. Curious, she asks him how he likes it. Expressing great admiration, he asks her to dance the story of Buddha's victory over Mara. Madhavi explains that her teacher never taught her that, and the Bhikku tells her to interpret it exactly the way Lord Siva interpreted Tripuradahana in dance in the first instance. He explains how one evening, on Pradosha day, Narada sang the story of Tripuradahana with fervour and Siva lost himself in it, internalized it and naturally interpreted with gestures and then called it the new science of Abhinaya. Madhavi follows this advice and dances Maravijyam superbly. The audience is all admiration.

(Then Madhavi and Kovalan fall apart, when he asks her to dance for him alone and Madhavi explains that her art is for everybody. Kovalan walks out on Madhavi.)

In the third scene, Madhavi bitterly regrets her behaviour and her separation from Kovalan and complains she cannot concentrate on her art. She wants to pass it on to her daughter who is too young.

News is brought then of Kovalan's execution in Madurai and Madhavi faints and cries.

In the fourth and last scene, Madhavi wants to decide about giving up her dance. Her mother advises her against it. A Vaishnavite scholar asks her to dedicate it to the Lord. A Buddhist monk, Sravana, advises her to become a nun. But Kalananda, the monk who asked her to dance Mara Vijaya

advises her to devote her art to Buddhist themes. Madhavi finally decides to do that not by herself but through her students.

In handling my radically new version of the Madhavi story, I have introduced Hindu Puranic legends, partly for enhancing the danceability of the drama as such and partly for maintaining a continuous link between the Hindu and Buddhist religious and legendary traditions. I have used the familiar Hindu themes to revive the less familiar Buddhist themes in a perfectly harmonious and defensible way.

परिमलमाधवीयम्

सुब्रह्मण्यकृतं नृत्यनाटकम्

The Story of Madhavi, the Fragrant, a dance drama by V. Subramaniam

नान्दी

शुद्धधन्यासी रूपकम्

प० आगतं तथागतं दयानिधिं तमाश्रये

अ० नागामरनरवंद्यं नलिनायताक्षं नागरूपधरवरं नागकोटिगंभीरम्

च० शोकहं शुद्धस्वरितवीणानिभनादकं
भागधेयात् भारतजातशौद्धोदनिम्
मागधात् कृत्स्नं भुवनं व्याप्तमार्गाधिपम्
रागहं सौब्रह्मण्यरम्यगीतैः स्तुतम् ।

Prayer

Suddha Dhanyasi *Roopakam*

P. I take refuge in that treasure of compassion, Lord Buddha who has come down to earth.

A. Him worshipped by Nagas, Devas and men, the one with lotuslike long eyes, who took the form of an elephant and is majestic like a million mountains.

Ch. Him who kills sorrow, whose voice is like the sound of a well tuned Vina, who was born son of Suddhodana due to

our good fortune, whose path (religion) has spread from Magadha to all over the world, who wards off greed and who is worshipped by the sweet songs of Subramaniam.

प्रथमं दृश्यम्

पुष्पपुर्याः प्रधाननृत्यरंगे नागरिकाः संगताः महानृत्याचार्यस्य सोमदेवस्य प्रथमशिष्यायाः माधव्याः रंगारोपणं द्रष्टुम् ।

आरोपणसमये आचार्यो माधव्यै हितोपदेशवार्तान् कथयति ।

SCENE I

In the main dance theatre of Poompuhar, the leading citizens have assembled to attend the debut (Arangetram) of Madhavi the leading student of the great dance teacher, Somadeva. The teacher gives some advice to Madhavi before the performance.

सोमदेवः

कानडा **आदि**

प० माधवी मधुरस्मिते निर्द्वन्द्वे रासवशंकृते

सादरं श्रृणु भाषणं मे सर्वकलाविशारदे ।

अ० चातकसन्निभशातकसहस्ररसिकहृत्पीठवासिनी

संगीतसर्वांगानां पारंगते भामिनी ।

तानत्तरिकिट तनत्तकिटतक तीं तीं तीं

तनतीं तनतीं तनतीं

दिनतक तरिकिट तद्दिमि किटकिट

तनत्तीम् तनत्तीम् तनत्तीम् ।

च० अभिनयकर्मण्यासक्त्या धृतपात्रैकाग्रगते त्वयि

अभिनीतपात्रे पूर्णमग्ना मा भव जाग्रत

अभिनकाले मात्वं विस्मर माधवीति कदाचन

अभिनयैदं द्वैधीभावम् आश्रय वत्से सदा सदा,

निपुणतमा ऊर्वशी पुरा नितान्तप्रेमवशंगता भुवं गता पतिता अहो भरतमुनेः शापेन सा ।

P. Oh Madhavi with a sweet smile ! One who has mastered all the Rasas ! One without equal ! Mistress of all the Arts ! Listen carefully to my words.

A. You occupy a throne in the hearts of millions of Rasikas waiting for you like chataka birds. You have crossed the ocean of music with all its parts.

Ch. When you are involved deeply in Abhinaya, single minded on your part (role) never get immersed fully ! Watch yourself ! Never forget during Abhinaya that you are Madhavi. In Abhinaya you should thus split yourself (into the role and your watching self). Even the great Urvasi, fully in the grip of love as she was, fell down to earth cursed by the sage Bharata.

माधवी

षण्मुखप्रिया **आदि**

प० कथय मे प्रियगुरुवर कथमभूत् भ्रष्टा ऊर्वशी

च० शतमखसभाप्रथमाभरणा, संगीत शास्त्रातिनिपुणा,

भरतमुनेः कलायां प्रवीणा भवकृतताण्डवलास्यप्राणा

मधुरतमाभिनयचतुरा, महारसिकजनमनोहरा,

विजितरंबादिनर्तकीवरा, विश्वमोहनचारुतरा ।

Madhavi

Shanmukhapriya *Adi*

P. Tell me my dear teacher, how was Urvasi banished (from heaven).

Ch. (She who) was the first ornament of Indra's court, who was master of music and all its parts, adept in the art of Bharata, the very soul of Tandava and Lasya created by Lord Siva, clever in sweet Abhinaya, the darling of all great Rasikas, one who conquered Rambha in a dance competition, endowed with a beauty bewitching the whole universe!

सोमदेवः

आरभी   आदि

प० नटनशास्त्रकारकं भरतं मुनिं देवेशो याचतेस्म
नाटय लक्ष्मीपरिणयकथामद्भुताम् इति ।

अ० पठनश्रवणात् अधिकतरं नाटकं परमानन्दकरं भरितनवरससागरम् ।

च० श‍ृंगारवल्ली ऊर्वशी श्रीपात्रधरा नटनेशी
लवंगलतासमकोमलदेहा वरये पुरुषोत्तममिति वाचं
अन्तरंगे विस्मरन्ती वरिता प्रूरवराजेन्द्रमिति
पुंगवो मुनिस्तदैव प्रकटयामास शापम्
भुवं पतन्ती कलाविहीना
भव गर्भवती परिणीय नरं ।

Somadeva

Arabhi   *Adi*

The King of Devas once requested Sage Bharata the creator of Natana Sastra, "Please stage the story of Lakshmi's Wedding."

(He added) "Drama is superior to reading and listening; it gives joy and peace and it pleases all."

Urvasi, the queen of dancers, with her body slim as a creeper, took the part of Lakshmi, but forgot the words "I choose Purushottama" and declared "I choose King Pruravas"; and on the spot, the great sage pronounced his curse : "Fall down to the earth, marry a man and become pregnant (a bearer of children)—without practicing any art."

माधवी—साधु बोधितं गुरुवरेण । जाग्रता भवेयमि त्याशिषं देहि ।

सोमदेवः—तथास्तु

माधवी—प्रथमे भागेऽहम् भवताबोधितं रुक्मिणीपरिणयं
नृत्याम्यभिनयन्ती ।

Madhavi : Well said by my great teacher ! Please bless me to be very wakeful.

Somadeva : So be it.

Madhavi : In the first part, I will dance with Abhinaya "Rukmini's marriage" as taught by you.

माधवी रंगं प्रविश्य, रुक्मिणीपात्रधरा द्वारकापतिमुद्दिश्य वर्णमेकं नृत्यति ।

Madhavi enters the stage and dances a Varnam in praise of the Lord of Dwaraka, taking the part of Rukmini.

भैरवी **आदि**

प० त्वय्यच्चुताविशति चित्तमपत्रपं मे

अ० शय्यायां निशीथे सभायां वा प्रभाते

आशया भृतायाः अतिमोहितायाः बालिकायाः

च० १ चन्दनमण्डित सुंदरदेह इंदीवरनिभनयनयुग

अरविन्दजितवदन मन्मनोमकरन्दरसिकभृंग मुकुंद

च० २ द्रौपदीमानसंरक्षणकर द्वारकाधीश क्षितीश वरेन्द्र

हृदि मे वसतिकृतशतमन्मथदर्पहर सुन्दर

इत्यहर्निशं प्रलपन्तीं विनिद्रामन्नपान विहीनां

सत्यधर्मपरिपालक पालय सत्यवचनं तव इति

त्यक्त्वा ह्रियां कुलं धनं मातरं पितरं

च० ३ त्यक्त्वा राजोचितधर्मान् त्यक्त्वा ममेति भावं

भक्त्या त्वय्यर्पितमना भयशंकाविहीना

शक्त्याबला भक्त्या धृता सत्यं तव स्मरन्ती

Bhairavi

Madhavi as Rukmini *Adi*

P. My heart, without hesitation, enters into union with you.

A. In my bed at night, in the palace hall by morning and day, the heart of this bewitched young girl full of love...

Ch. 1 Oh Lord with a beautiful body adorned by sandal paste !

With eyes beautiful as Indivara flowers,

With a face more beautiful than the lotus,

The Bee that savours the pollen of my heart, Oh Mukunda !

Ch. 2 The saviour of Draupadi's honour ! the great king of Dwaraka! The greatest of Kings ! the beautiful Lord superior to a hundred cupids, who lives in my heart! Thus prattling I spend night and day without food and sleep. Oh Upholder of Truth and Dharma ! Keep your promise to me.

Ch. 3 Leaving aside my shyness, family, riches, father and mother, the royal customs and laws and my own identity, I have given my mind with Bhakti to you without fear and doubt. I am weak physically but am sustained by Bhakti and the memory of your words of promise.

अथ माधवी रुक्मिणी भावेन गौरीपूजां कृत्वा प्रार्थयति

Then Madhavi as Rukmini performs Gauripuja and prays.

माधवी

यदुकुलकांबोदि — आदि

प० यदुकुलेशं मे कामितं पतिम् इहानय सत्वरम् इति
याचे देवी ।

अ० मधुरतरं मन्मनोहरं मदपहरणपरिणयोत्सुकं

च० आलिंगनातुरकरयुगलाम् अधरमधुरसजिज्ञासुं मां
आयान्तीं देव्यायतनात् अवलंब्य करेण सः
आरोप्य मां महारथे परिणीय गांधर्वविधेः
आनयतु द्वारकामिति त्वां प्रार्थये देवी ।

Madhavi

Yadukula Kambhoji — *Adi*

P. I beg you Devi, please bring here quickly the Lord of Yadus and the husband of my choice.

A. Him, sweetest of all, the stealer of my heart, and one who is eager to abduct and marry me.

Ch. I yearn to embrace him with my two hands. I want to savour the wine of his lips ; Let him, as I come out of the Devi temple, take me by the hand, put me on his chariot, marry me by Gandharva rites, and take me to Dwaraka. Thus I pray to you Oh Devi.

माधव्याः अभिनयमहत्वेन सम्मोहितो गोपालः

सहसा रंगमारुह्य माधवींम् उच्चैः प्रशंसति

रंजनी	आदि

निरुपमसुन्दरी निस्समाभिनयवशंकृतमयूरी

निरतिशयकलावल्लभे प्रपुल्लवनजाभे

नृत्यकलाविशारदे नवरससुधानिधे

रसिकानां सौभाग्यनिधे रंगराज्याधिपते तव

तुंगकलावशंगतोऽस्म्यहम् गोपालांकितनामाहम्

Gopala

Bewitched by Madhavi's Abhinaya, Gopala (from the audience) climbs on to the stage and praises Madhavi loudly and spontaneously.

Ranjani	*Adi*

Oh peerless beauty ! the peacock .that has totally mastered Abhinaya ! the great Master of Art ! The like of a fully open lotus flower ! the queen of dance ! the treasure house of the nine rasas ! the Good fortune of Rasikas ! the empress of the dance theatre ! I am enslaved by your great art, I named Gopala.

तत्समये माधव्यपि मालाधृतहस्ता नाट्यभावे गोपालं प्रभुं प्रार्थयति

कुंतलवराली	आदि

परिपालय मां गोपाल कांचनचेल घननील

अरिमर्दनसत्पालनलील अज्ञानतिमिरकाल

कुंचितशिखिपिंछालंकृतकुन्तलवरलोल

पंचबाणजितलावण्य दीनशरण्य वरेण्य

संचितपापविदूर दयया अंगीकृतमन्माल

कृपालवाल सत्गुणशील अगणितलीलाधर गोपाल

इति गायन्ती पुष्पमालां गोपालस्य ग्रीवायां क्षिप्यति ।

At that time, Madhavi (as Rukmini) prays to Lord Gopala thus.

Madhavi

Kuntala Varali *Adi*

Save me oh Gopala ! wearing a golden Cloth and dark like the cloud ! who curbs enemies and saves the virtuous ! the Death of the darkness of ignorance ! Who is beautified by the bent peacock feather on his hair ! More Beautiful than Cupid ! the saviour of the helpless ! The enemy of sin ! Who has accepted my garland with grace ! The Merciful One ! My Virtuous Lord of endless pranks and playfulness !

Thus singing, Madhavi places the gardland on Gopala's neck.

सहसा
संभूतमेनं दृष्ट्वा सभ्या: करघोषं कुर्वन्ति ।

परन्तु सोमदेवो माधव्या: माता चित्रवती च

प्रथमे भ्रान्ता: तत: रुष्टाश्च ।

रुष्टो एवं माधवीपतनात् दु:खाक्रान्तो च सोमदवो घोषयति

मुखारी खण्ड एकम्

प० पात्रभाववशंगता पतिता ऊर्वशीसन्निभा अधोगता

अ० शास्त्रज्ञानेऽसमानपण्डिता सम्मोहिता भावमग्ना खण्डिता

च० कोमलगात्रा कमलारुणक्ता श्यामलकृष्णवशंगता नारीपात्रा
सोमदेवशापम् वारितुमशक्ता
भामिनी भवेन्नेति शप्ता ।
अतुलितमहानिपुणापि भव नृत्यकलाविहीना
असमानाभिनयचक्रवर्तिन्यपि भव नृत्यकलाविहीना
अकुण्ठितमारुतनिभनृत्तवेगापि भव नृत्यकलाविहीना

Seeing this sudden 'accident' the audience claps. But Somadava and Madhavi's mother Chitravati are first shocked and then angry. Somadeva is both angry and sorry at the fall of Madhavi and cries out.

Somadeva

Mukhari *Khanda Ekam*

P. Lost in her part, like Urvasi, she fell. She went down.

A. Unequalled expert in the art, immersed in her part, she is punished.

Ch. Fine-limbed and lotus-faced, she took the part of the lady lost in love for Krishna. She cannot avoid the curse of Somadeva and is now cursed never to become the topmost.

Even though you are an unequalled expert, you will lose your art.

Even though you are an empress of Abhinaya, you will lose your art.

Even though your rythmics are faster than the wind, you will lose your art.

चित्रवती तु अतीव रुष्टो शापं ददाति

भेगडा **आदि**

प० आचार्यवाचं विस्मरन्ती आश्रितकलां त्यजन्ती
पाशानुबद्धा माधवी पराभवं यातु
च० प्रियेण मानुषं वरिता विस्मृत्य कुलाचारं
ह्रियाविहीना स्वाहिते अतिलीना भयहीना
श्रियं विहाय केवलं प्रेमभरिता मे सुता
जयं त्यजन्ती परिणीता सदा पराजयम्

Chitravati is more angry and curses her.

Begada *Adi*

P. Forgetting the words of her teacher and even the greatness of her art, that Madhavi who is tied by love, let her endure humiliation.

Ch. She chose a man out of love, forgetting her caste rules; without shame and without fear she chooses evil for herself; she neglects wealth and is filled with love and forsakes success to marry failure.

माधवी तदा उन्मत्ताविव गोपालमालिङ्ग्य, घोषयति

सिंहेन्द्रमध्यमम् **आदि**

सिंहेन्द्रसन्निभं प्रभुं सुनृत्याभिनयरसिकोत्तमम्
तम्मालया वरितास्म्यहम् उद्भूतहर्षेण नृत्याम्यहम्
ममकलाप्रभावं घोषितं
मदन्तरंगे नृत्यन्तं
सुधामयैः गीतवाक्यैः
सदा घोषयाम्यभिनयैः

Madhavi as if possessed embraces Gopala and proclaims.

Simhendra Madhyamam *Adi*

That lord of mine like a King lion, that great connoisseur of dance and Abhinaya, I have chosen with my garland and out of that joy I dance.

That Lord who proclaimed my prowess in dance,
That Lord who dances in my heart
With nectarlike songs,
I will proclaim and dance.

तदा सहसा तत्र कलानन्दो नाम भिक्षुः आविशन्
माधवीम् आशीर्वचनैः उत्साहयति

Then a Bhikku named Kalananda entering there suddenly encourages Madhavi with blessings.

असावेरी **खण्ड एकम्**

पात्रैकाग्रमनाभूता भासतु नटने गृहे च
शास्त्रेण विधितं सर्वं श्रद्धया सुधिया गृहीता
रात्रौ च दिवि च बुद्धदेवदेव कृपापूर्णा
अत्रैवाप्यमुत्रैव माधवी परिमला भवेत् ।

She who identified with her role will shine in the house and on the stage ; doing all that is prescribed by Shastras with attention and intelligence, filled with Buddha Deva's blessings day and night, here and hereafter Madhavi will remain fragrant.

द्वितीयं दृश्यम्

पुष्पपुर्यां वसन्तारंभकाले सर्वे नागरिकाः
इन्द्रमहोत्सवदिने नगरमध्यस्थ नाट्यरंगे
संगताः माधवीं प्रशंसन्ति

SCENE II

In Poompuhar at the beginning of spring, all the citizens are gathered on the day of the Indra festival at the central dance hall of the city and welcome Madhavi.

सर्वे

अटाना **रूपकं**

नटनसुंदरीणां सुन्दरतमा (सा)
नगराभरणा नानाविधनृत्यनिपुणा, दक्षिणोत्तरनाट्यप्रवीणा,
तांडवलास्योभयवशंकृतचरणा तरुणारुणपादबद्धकिण्किणीनादैः
तत्स्थितसर्वजनहृदयं हर्षेण पूरयमाणा,
आयाति माधवी

Atana *All* *Roopakam*

The most beautiful of beautiful dancers, the ornament of the city, expert in several dances, learned in the Southern and Northern schools, whose feet have mastered Tandava and Lasya—the sound from whose ankletbells on her red young feet fills all the citizens with joy—that Madhavi comes here.

सर्वे

नाट **रूपकं**

इन्द्रमहोत्सवे इहसंगतैः याच्यतेऽधुना
नागरिकैः सर्वैः नाटयत्रिफरदहनकथामिति, माधवी हे

Nata *Roopakam*

On this Indra festival (day) it is requested by all the assembled citizens now, that you dance the dance of Siva's burning of the three cities, Oh Madhavi !

साभिनयं त्रिफरदहनकथां माधवी नृत्यति

Madhavi dances with Abhinaya, the burning of the three cities.

नाटकुरंजि आदि

प० आयाति महेश्वरो अमितोजसा भास्वरो निरायुधकरयुगो समावृतामरगणो

तनतकतरिकिटतां तां तां (तन)

तत्तक्क तकतिमि तां तरिकिट तीं तीं तीं

साक्रोषं घोषत्भिः सर्वशत्रुनाशं

वाग्देववैकुण्टादिभिः प्रार्थितो इत्थं

शीघ्रम् अस्मान् शस्त्रीय देवदेव

वीराग्रगण्य संयोजयाधुना ।

Natakuranji *Adi*

Here comes Maheshwara shining with limitless light without any weapons surrounded by Devas, shouting destruction to all enemies ; Brahma, Vishnu and others pray to him thus. "Quickly oh Lord ; convert us into weapons and use us now, oh hero of heroes."

भवतु भवतु तथैव

Lord Siva : Let it be so, let it be so.

सर्वे देवाः स्वप्रतापानि प्रकटीकुर्वन्तः नृत्यन्ति

The Devas then proclaim their competence each and dance.

सर्वे

समरविजयसन्नद्धाः अनिरुद्धाः अतिसमर्थाः

All

Ready for victory in battle, we are unopposable and very competent.

आश्रितास्त्र्यंबकं वयम्

We have attached ourselves to Lord Siva.

देवः 1

करधृताशुगोऽहम् निशितनिपातोऽहम्
निरतिशयजवसहित निर्मूलकरचतुर निर्घृणतीक्ष्णतमोऽहम्

One Deva

I am the arrow in his hand ; I do not miss my target. With enormous speed, I am clever at uprooting enemies ; I am mercilessly sharp.

देवः 2

निरुपमशरवर्षणोत्सुकोऽहम्
अनुपमनगजाभ्रूनिभकुंचितो
धनुवरपिनाकनामाहम् धन्वनामधिराजभृतोऽहम्
दानवभीपणकरघोषज्यामण्डितप्रचण्डोऽहम्

Another Deva

I am keen to shower peerless arrows ; I am bent like the brows of Parvati of great beauty. I am the greatest of bows, Pinaka. I am borne by the greatest of archers. I am ornamented by a bowstring whose sound itself strikes fear among Asuras.

देवः 3

वज्रसारशूलायुधोऽहम् वैरिवपुर्निभेदनचतुरो
वाचामगोचरवेगेण वैरिवंशक्षयं कारयिष्ये

Another Deva

I am the trident strong as thunder. I am clever in breaking the enemy ; With a speed beyond words, I will reduce to nothing the clan of enemies.

पन्तुवराली　　　　　　　　　　　　　　　　　　　　　　आदि

दृष्ट्वा ममताभृतं, देवगणं, श्रुत्वा प्रतापप्रकटीकरणं
मत्वा मनसि त्रिपुरदहनं ममताहरणं युगपद्, देवानां
स्मिताननं हिमवत्सुतायाः जितेन्द्रियो शंभुरवलोकय
मन्दहासांकितं सुन्दरास्यं चन्द्रमौलिर्विदारितो
आनन्दरौद्ररसांकित महाहासं सहसाकरोत्
दुन्दुभिशतकोटिस्वनात् त्रिपुरनाशम् अभूत् तत्क्षणे

Pantuvarali　　　　　　　　　　　　　　　　　　　　　　*Adi*

Seeing the vain and proud Devas, hearing their proud boasting, deciding to burn the three cities and remove the

vanity of Devas simultaneously, looking at the smiling face of Parvati, His smiling beautiful mouth, he opened wide and made a loud sound of laughter suddenly displaying joy and anger. With that sound like a billion drums, the three cities were burnt instantaneously.

मध्यमावती **आदि**

त्रिपुरान्तकं कालान्तकं ममान्तर्वसन्तं

प्रभुमीशं महेशम् अभिनयन्ती अहं

ताकिट किट किट तनत्तकिट तक तीं तीं तद्दीम्

इतिनृत्याम्यहम् नृत्याम्यहम् ।

The destroyer of Tripura and Yama, lives in my heart. That Maheswara, that Lord I interpret in dance.

बौद्धभिक्षुंकलानन्द दृष्टा माधवी पृच्छाति सविस्मयम्

Seeing a Kalananda Bhikku, Madhavi is surprised and asks.

माधवी

हमीर्कल्याणी **आदि**

बौद्धभिक्षुवर कापायांबर किमिहते स्वामिन्

Hamirkalyani *Adi*

Revered Buddhist Bhikshu, wearing ochre, How are you here.

भिक्षु : उत्तम भारतनृत्यवल्लभे उत्साहितोऽस्मि तव नृत्यात्

You well versed in the great dance of Bharata, I am enthu sed by your dance.

मा० बद्धांजलिरहम् आशीर्वचनं तावकं याचे

Ma : With folded hands I ask for your blessings.

भि० बद्धांजलिरहम् याचे त्वां बुद्धदेवविजयं नाटयेति

Bhi : With folded hands I ask you to dance the victory of Buddha over Mara.

मा० नाटये कथं नाट्यविरुद्ध कथां गुरुणाबोधिताम्

Ma : How can I dance a story against Srungara and not taught by my Guru.

भि० नाटय यथा त्रिपुरारिः पुरा नारदगानवशंगतो

श्रुत्वा पुनस्त्रिपुरवृत्तान्तं, स्मृत्वा कथां स्थापयित्वामनसि
नाटयितो पुनस्त्रिपुरदहनं नानाविधैरभिनयैः प्रदोषे
बोधितोऽभिनयशास्त्रं नवं तण्डुं, शासितो प्रचारयेति

Bhi : Dance it the same way Siva danced Tripuradahana. Narada sang the story of Tripura. Siva was entranced and danced Tripura story again with Abhinaya. He taught this new science of Abhinaya to Tandu and told him to develop it.

तदा माधवी मारविजयकथां नाटयति ।

मारः

सिंहेन्द्रमध्यमम् आदि

शंभुदर्पहरोहं तं सर्वयोगस्वरूपिणं
विवायितरतिक्रीडावनिताभिर्वशंवहे
तनत्तोम् तकिट तनत्तोम् तकिट तनत्तोम् तकिट तरन्ना
तरनतातानि तरनतातानि तरन्ना तिरन्ना
तकजणु तरिकिट तरन्ना तीं तीं तिरन्न
तनत्तकिटतक ताना तेंदाना तिल्लाना
युध्यामि सिद्धार्थमत्र
विद्यासु सर्वेषु उत्कृष्ट शृंगारविद्यावतीभिरहम्
अद्यैव युध्यामि अधुनैव युध्यामि
अन्वेषकं दुःखनिरोधकं पंथानम् ।

Then Madhavi dances the victory over Mara.

MARA

Simhendra Madayamam . *Adi*

Mara : I am the one who humbled Siva. This man who embodies all Yoga, I will seduce with pretty women expert in Kamaleela. I will fight Siddharta now with women learned in the greatest of arts Srungara. I will fight him today. I will fight him now, him who seeks the path of deliverance from misery.

हुसेनी आदि

पुष्पबाणैरतिमृदुलैः पूजये

पूजयन्निव ध्यानदुर्गं भेदये

संकाशामानां जिज्ञासां नाशये

महाशया तत् हृदयं परिपूरये ।

Huseni *Adi*

I will worship him with arrows made of soft flowers.

As if worshiping, I will break open his fortress of meditation.

I will destroy his shining desire for wisdom and fill his heart with intense desire.

ततः मारदुहितरः आगच्छान्ति तासां ज्येष्टा

वसन्तलतिका साभिनयं नृत्यति ।

Then the four daughters of Mara come in and the eldest, Vasantalatika dances.

कल्याणी आदि

प० आगच्छाम्यतिसुन्दरतम। वसन्तलतिकेति धृतनामा

अ० पृच्छामि ध्याने निमग्नं इच्छानिहन्तारं भीरूं

इच्छाविनाशात् कथं सुखमिति उच्चैः परिहसन्ती

Kalyani *Adi*

P : I come the most beautiful lady named Vasantalatika.

A : I ask him immersed in meditation curbing desires. What good comes out of destroying desire—laughing aloud.

च० पश्य वसन्तकुसुमैरलंकृतम् ऊरुवेलं वनं

पश्यैह् लास्यताण्डवादि नृत्यपरन्तं मयूरगणं

पश्य मे यौवनं चारुतां पश्यमां दुःखरहितां

विसृज्येन्द्रियदमनं व्यर्थमार्गं वीतभयो विहाय तपो

आविशानन्दगंगाम् अनुरागरासक्रीडापरो ।

Ch. 1 See this beautiful Uruvela forest decorated by spring flowers. See here, the bevy of peacocks dancing Lasya and

Tandava. See my youth, my beauty, see how I am carefree. Give up this control of senses which is vain—without fear and tapas enter the Ganga of pleasure, enjoy the play of love and romance.

च० २ यच्छामि मे दिव्यदेहं विमुच्यभयम् आस्वादयेति

आस्वादयाधरमधुं पयोधरयुगवसुं

मयैव दत्तम् आनन्दवित्तं मा निराकुरुध्वम् ।

Ch. 2. I give you my beautiful body ; Give up fear and enjoy it. Enjoy the nectar of my lips ; enjoy the richness of my breasts ; This wealth of pleasure I give, don't reject it !

मुखारी **आदि**

दग्धा तपोवह्निनाहं दग्धा तदस्पर्शयोगेण

तमोनिभेदक कोटिसूर्येण अन्धीकृताधुनाहम्

अशक्ता महामेरुगंभीरम् अवलोकयितुम् अपि अधुना

Mukhari *Adi*

I am burnt by the fire of his tapas, by his Yoga of renunciation. I am blinded by a million suns breaking the darkness. I am unable even to look at him majestic like Mahameru.

भेगड

श्रृंगारेणाजितं वीक्ष्य भंगीकृतमनोरथो

शीघ्रं तं नाशयामीति घोषयन् घोररुपिणं

क्रोधेति धृतनामं तं सेनानीं प्रेषितोऽधुना ।

Begada

Seeing him undefeated by Srungara, his ambition foiled Mara proclaimed :

I will break him soon and sent his general *Krodha* (anger) looking fierce.

क्रोधो

भेगड **आदि**

अतृप्तकामोद्भूतोऽहम् अपरिमित शक्तिमानहम्
अकुण्ठितमहाधामोऽहम् क्रोधेति धृतनामो अतिभयंकरो क्रूरोऽहम्
अजितो मुनीन्द्रैः
मुनीनां वरेण्यदुर्वासार्चितोऽहम् मुनीन्द्रकौशिकेनाजितोऽहम्
मुनिराजवर्येति विख्यात शाक्यमुनिमानसम् आविशाम्यहम्
शान्तं त्यज सार्वभौमो भव सागरांबरां भेदिनीं
क्षत्रियार्हेन घोरयुद्धेन जित्वा भव चक्रवर्ती

Krodha

Begada *Adi*

I am born out of unrequited desire. I am most powerful. I am unobstructed. My name is Krodha, I am fearful, cruel and unconquered by saints. I am worshipped by Durvasa the great sage. I am unconquered by kingly sage Kausika. I will now enter the heart of Sakya muni famous as the greatest of saint Kings. Give up your calm. Become an emperor. This ocean-girt world, conquer by fierce war like a Kshatriya and become an emperor.

कानडा

इतिब्रुवन्तं महासुरं जितेन्द्रियो मुनीन्द्रो स्मिताननोऽवलोकयत्
तदैव तत्क्षणे, क्रोधेति क्रूरनामको यातोहि पंचताम्

Kanada

On this Asura speaking thus, the saint king cast his look smiling. That very moment Krodha the cruel, collapsed and died.

साम **खण्ड अकं**

मारविजयप्रभावं घोषन्ती
मनसा स्मरन्ती अभिनयन्ती
तक्कत्तकतिमि तत्तक तीं तीं लीमिति
किण्किणी नादैः पूजयन्ती
माधवी विजयते नृत्यनाटकाचार्यमणिर्विजयते विजयते विजयते

All (the citizens) sing.

That Madhavi who proclaims the victory over Mara with Abhinaya and worships with the sound of anklet bells, is victorious. The author of such dance dramas, is victorious too.

तृतीयं दृश्यम्

अलंकृत-चैत्ये मञ्चे उपविशन्ती माधवी विरहतापपीडिता प्रलपति ।

जोन्पुरी आदि

प० त्यक्त्वा गुरुं मातरं त्यक्तास्म्यहं प्रियेण

अ० मत्वा कलावल्लभां मां मालया परिणीय गोपालो

श्रुत्वा कलाप्रतापं मम स्पष्टो बहिर्यातिवान् अहो

च० जानामि नाहं किं क्षेमतरं जानामि नाहं किं मुख्यतरं

जानामि नाहं किं जीवलक्ष्यं जानामि स्वाम् अवलेष्वबला

पृच्छामि कं कां गच्छामि कुत्र

यच्चामि कस्येदं स्वेच्छार्जितमहितम्

मा त्यज मां गोपाल मा त्यज नृत्यदेवते

मा त्यज नृत्यगुरुवर मा त्यज मामनाथाम् ।

SCENE III

Madhavi sitting on a couch in her decorated lounge wails about her pangs of separation.

Jonpuri *Adi*

Deserting my mother and Guru, I am deserted by my lover. Gopala who married me with my garland and thought I was the greatest master of dance, hearing all about my dancing prowess and fame, alas ! he left me.

I don't know which is better for me; I don't know which is more important ; I don't know the meaning of life but I know I am the weakest of the weak.

Where do I go ? Whom do I ask ? To whom do I give away this self-sought misery?

Don't leave me Gopala! Don't leave me the Goddess of dance. Don't leave me my great dance-master--me, alone and helpless.

तदा तत्रायाता माता चित्रवती कथयति ।

धन्यासि देशादि

प० कलापूजककुलेजाता कथं बाध्यते विरहात्

अ० कलापूते हृदि सर्वाः भावाः अस्थिराः

जालकणिका पद्मपत्रे यथैवासक्ता

च० शृंगारात् क्षणेंव सा वीरमभिनयन्ती

वीरात् सहसैव सा भयं दर्शयन्ती

शोकात् हास्यं प्राप्य अद्भुतं नटन्ती

जीर्णवासांसीव भावान् त्यक्त्वा नर्तकी मुक्ता ।

Then her mother Chitravati comes there and says.

Dhanyasi *Desadi*

P : How can one born in an art-worshipping family feel the pangs of separation ?

A : In a heart purified by art, all feelings are temporary like water drops on a lotus leaf.

Ch : She goes from Srungara the next minute to interpret heroism and from that suddenly she shows fear; from sorrow she goes on to laughter and shows wonder ; like old clothes, she casts away all Bhavas and is released from them all.

तत्समये मधुरानगरात् आगतो यात्रिकः

चैत्यं प्रविश्य गोपालमरणवृत्तान्तं कथयति

रागमालिका

मुखारी आदि

प० घोरं वृत्तान्तं श्रृणु भाग्यहीने विख्यातशीले वनजानने

अ० घोरपापवशात् दृष्टवा घोरकथां तां वर्णये कथम्

च० भारतनृत्य रसिकशिरोमणिरायातो मधुरां

शारदचन्द्र निभाननां भार्याश्चानीय
दारिद्र्यवशात् पादाभरणं विक्रेतुं तत्र
क्रूरकांचनवणिजमेकं ददौ नृपसेवकैः
आनीतो, स्तेनेति कल्पितो
अतिशीघ्रं नृपाज्ञयाहृतो ।

(एतच्छ्रुत्वा माधवी नष्टप्रज्ञा भूमौ पतति ।)

आहिरी

च० २ दृष्टा पतिव्रतामणिस्तदैव पाण्ड्यसभायां
घोषयन् पतेरनघत्वं पादाभरणंनिभेदनात्,
नष्टायुषं नृपं च तत् नष्टायुषां च राज्ञीं
दृष्ट्वाप्यशान्तमानसा मधुरां दहेति अग्नि

अटाना

च० ३ आहूय घोषिता आज्ञां आहूत पावको
असमत्वरेण आगतो तां नगरीमतिरभ्यां
त्रिपुरदहनमधिकृतवेगेन
दहनमारभते क्षणे स्म ।

At that moment, a traveller from Madurai rushes in and tells the story of Gopala's execution.

Mukhari *Ragamalika* *Adi*

P : Oh unfortunate Madhavi ! famous and beautiful ! Please listen to my sad story.

A : Because of my sins, I had to witness (and hear) this story. How can I describe it.

Ch. 1 : The great Rasika of Bharata Natyam (Gopala) came to Madurai with his wife with a face like the winter moon. Falling on evil days, he went to sell his wife's anklet to a cunning cruel goldsmith ; he was led by the King's men mistakenly, condemned as a thief and by the careless orders of the King, was executed.

(On hearing this Madhavi faints instantly.)

Ahiri : **Ch 2** : The angry virtuous wife went to the Pandya Sabha and proclaimed her husband's innocence. Seeing her other anklet, the King died on the spot and the Queen too followed him. Seeing all that but still not pacified ;

Atana : **Ch 3** : She called on the God of fire to burn Madurai. The God came with unusual speed and started to burn the beautiful city faster than Lord Siva's burning of Tripura.

चतुर्थं दृश्यम्

माधवी अलंकृतचैत्ये मञ्चे उपविशन्ती भ्रान्ता तूष्णीम् भवति, तस्य माता भिक्कवः विष्णुभक्तो च तस्याः उपदेशवार्तान् ब्रुवन्ति ।

माता चित्रवती

सिंहेन्द्रमध्यमम् **आदि**

प० कलापूर्णकुलोत्पन्ना कलां त्यक्तुंम् नार्हसि,
च० कला त्यक्ता मह्रा रुष्टा त्यक्तवन्तीं भ्रामयेत्
भ्रमणात् ज्वरमृत्युं च जायते काले गते
ततो धीरा भव वत्से उत्तिष्ट नृत्यवल्लभे
नृत्येण विस्मर दुःखं नगरं च परितोषय ।

SCENE IV

Madhavi is sitting on a bed in her decorated lounge, silent and confused.

Her mother, Bhikkus and a Vishnubhakta offer her advice.

Chitravati, her mother

Simhendra Madhyamam *Adi*

P : She who is born in a family devoted to art should not give it up at all.

Ch : Art when given up becomes angry and turns mad the deserter. From madness comes sickness and death as time goes by. Therefore, take courage, darling, and sit up. By dance, you forget your sorrow and you please the citizens too.

श्रवणभिक्षुः

देष **आदि**

प० दुःखनिवारणं कर्तुम् इह दुःखकारणं जानीहि

अ० दुःखम् अतृप्ताशया जायते तृप्ताशोमानुषो नास्ति

दुःखं निहन्तुम् आशां हन तस्मात् भव शान्तमानसा

च० इत्थं प्रसिद्धीकृतबौद्धमार्गं

बद्धांजलिस्त्वम् अंगीकुरु

शुद्धीकृतमानसा माधवी त्वं

बौद्धविहारे शरणं व्रज ।

Sravana Bhikku

Desh *Adi*

P : To ward off sorrow, you must know the cause of sorrow.

A : Sorrow comes from unfulfilled desire and no man has fulfilled all his desires. To throw out sorrow, kill desire and attain peace of mind.

Ch : This path, made famous by Lord Buddha, you should accept with folded hands. Thus with a purified mind, Oh Madhavi, take refuge in a Buddhist monastery.

माधवी

देष् **आदि**

नाहमायत्ता विहारं विशन्तुम्

न पक्वमानसा बलहीना

शोकं विस्मर्तुम् आशाहर्त्ति

न कर्तुम् मया शक्यते ।

Madhavi

Desh *Adi*

I am not ready to enter a Vihara. I am weak and immature of mind.

It is not possible for me to kill all desire to forget my sorrow.

विष्णुभक्तः

देवमनोहरि आदि

प० रागहृत्तिमार्गम् त्यज रागार्पणमार्गं शरणं व्रज वरानने

अ० शोकहं सुलभं देवमनोहरं क्षेमकरम्

च० भागधेयाप्तकलाकौतुकं परमसुन्दरशरीरं
रागरसिकनवरसार्णवयदुवंशतिलकाराधने
रागपूरितमनसा अर्पय शोकविहीना भव
इत्याख्यातमहाभक्तिमार्गम् द्राविडदेशजातमाचरिता ।

माधवी

नाहमायत्ता आचरितुम् भक्तिमार्गम्
रागपूरितमनसि मे काममोहागमनं बिभेमि

Vishnu Bhakta

Deva manohari *Adi*

P : Give up the method of killing emotion. Adopt the method of offering it to God.

A : It is easy, it kills sorrow, produces good and is pleasing to the Gods.

Ch : Your talent in art obtained by your good fortune and your most beautiful body, offer them both to the worship of the light of the Yadu Clan Lord Krishna, the connoisseur of emotions and the ocean of nine rasas—with an emotion-filled heart and banish all sorrow. This is the great and famous path of Bhakti, born in the Tamil country.

Madhavi

I am not ready to adopt the path of Bhakti. Into my mind when it is filled with emotion, I am afraid, lust and desire will enter.

कलानन्दभिक्षुः

हंसनादम् आदि

प० राजहंसन्निभे राजार्चिते महाराजमार्गम् दर्शयामि सुते

अ० तेजोमय सुन्दरवपुषं शाक्यसिंहं मनसि संस्थापिता
देशोन्नतिकरतथागतपरनृत्यात्मकनाटकान्यभिनय

च० अशोककनिष्कादि शौर्यप्रभावं
अंबासुजातादि भागधेयं
यशोधरायाः त्यागोन्नतिं च
सर्वाण्यभिनय समानरहिते ।

Kalananda Bhikku

Hamsanadam *Adi*

P : Oh, My Daughter! Like a King Swan, admired by Kings, I will show you the royal path.

A : Placing in your mind, the lion of the Sakyas of shining beautiful body, perform and interpret dance-dramas on Buddha, thus raising the reputation of the motherland.

Ch : The heroism of Asoka, Kanishka and others ; the good fortune of Amba, Sujata and others, the great sacrifice of Yasodhara, all this, you should interpret in dance, Oh Peerless One !

माधवी

साम **आदि**

आश्रयामि राजमार्गम् आश्रिता पश्यामि
अतिदूरे काले बौद्धपरनाटकानि
संगीतसहितरम्यानि सौब्रह्मण्यकृतानि
सुलक्षणाभिरभिनीतानि नृत्यनाटकानि

तिल्लाना

तां तक्कतां तत्तिम् तक्कतोम् तकत्तिमि तकतिमि दित्तलांगु तक
तां तां तत्ताम् तदीम तीं तद्दीम् दिनत्तकिट दिनत्तकिटतीम्
सामविजित भुवनत्रयं संस्थापितसनातन
धर्म्मं निष्कामं निर्मोहं निरवधिकरुणा
धामं निखिलकल्याणगुणाभिरामं बुद्धेति
धृतनामं तमाश्रिता नृत्यामि तिल्लानम् ।

तातक तद्दिमि तनं तकिट तकतिमि तोम् धृक्तोम्
तनं तकिट तनं तकिट तकिट तों तातक तज्जणु
तत्तरिकट किट तों तनत्तिमि तिनत्तक
तकिट तोम् तन तोम् तकतोम् धृक्तोम् ।

Madhavi

Sama *Adi*

I adopt the royal path and see in the distant future, dramas with a Buddhist content, dance dramas with enjoyable music by Subramaniam, being interpreted by dancers with perfect features.

Tillana

That conqueror of the three worlds by peace, the establisher of the ancient law, that one without desire and lust, the most compassionate, the repository-of all good qualities named Buddha ; Him I worship and dance a Tillana.

प्रबुद्धमेखलीयम्

वे सुब्रह्मण्यकृतं नृत्यनाटकम्

The Story of the Awakened (Mani) Mekhala
A dance drama by V. Subramaniam

The original story of Manimekhala in the Tamil epic *Manimekhlai* by poet Sattanar has a main strand and several side strands. The main strand deals with how prince Udayakumara pursues Manimekalai already being trained as a (nun) Bhikkuni, in vain, till he is mistakenly murdered, after which, she devotes her life to spreading Buddhism. I have preserved this strand with minor alterations. The side stories include the story of Madhavi's friend Vasantamala, several short stories flowing out of the description of the burning ground, the stories of Kayachandika, Aputran and Adirai and other short references. These I have, of course, omitted ruthlessly. The main story after my alterations and editing is given below—as I have used it in this dance drama.

On Indira festival (spring festival) day in Poompuhar (Pushpapuri) Mahadavi and her daughter Manimekhala stay home without participating and Madhavi explains to Vasantamala why. They have embraced Buddhism and do not want to partake in transitory pleasures. As Madhavi recounts the tragedy of her life, Manimekhala's tears spoil the garland she is making. Madhavi then sends her to pick fresh flowers with

a friend Sudhamati as guard through a less frequented part of the city to the Upavana.

Prince Udayakumara, however, comes to know of Manimekhala's going to the Upavana and 'chases' her but she takes 'sanctuary' inside a holy marble edifice. Her friend Sudhamati explains to the prince that she is a noviciate burning with her austerities and advises him to give her up. Unwillingly, the prince goes away promising to 'catch' her sooner or later. Manimekhala is utterly confused—not knowing whether she loves the prince or hates him or just sympathises with him.

She is now trapped in the Upavana and is afraid to come out into the streets when the Goddess Tara or Manimekhala takes her away to Manipallavam island. Worshipping Buddha's holy footprints there, she learns that she was married to prince Udayakumara in her previous birth, thus explaining her ambivalent feelings towards him. She feels that she can conquer this worldly attachment and even change the prince into a detached person. She also gets the gift of an 'Amudhsurabhi' a vessel which produces an endless supply of food.

Back in Poompuhar clad as a nun she feeds the poor, preaching compassion. The prince comes to see her and her efforts to fob him off are fruitless as she herself is in two minds. Sleepless, he goes to visit her at night and is murdered by a foreign spy.*

While Manimekhalai weeps over him, she is caught as the cause of his murder and tortured.

Released finally as innocent, she sets out to preach the path of Buddhist compassion by interpreting of Buddha's story in dance with her disciples.

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* In the original epic, Manimekala, to avoid being followed by Udayakumara, takes the form another woman Kayachandika, whose Gandharva husband, murders Udayakumara for chasing his wife. Kumara himself discovers that Manimekhala has changed her form and chases her as Kayachandika, only to be murdered. I have avoided these pointless complications by attributing the murder more naturally to a foreign spy.

नान्दी

सावेरी **खण्ड एकम्**

प० आर्यसत्यान्यष्टांगिकमार्गं च प्रकटी कृतमनिशं नमामि शिरसा मनसा

अ० सूर्यकोटिनिभप्रकाशं सुरनरसेवितं शुद्धोदनसुतं तथागतम्

च० आचार्यवर्यम् अखिलभुवनपरिपालनोत्सुकम्

प्रचारसिंहं पालितमणिमेखलादिजनम्

सज्जनहृत्पीठाधिपं तं सौब्रह्मण्यगीतामोदकम्

Prayer

Saveri *Khanda Ekam*

P. I bow down with my head and my mind to the one who proclaimed the noble truths and the eightfold path.

A. Him, bright like a crore of suns, venerated by men and Gods, son of Sudhodana, the Thathagatha.

Ch. Greatest among teachers, eager to save the three worlds, the lion of preaching ; who protected people like Manimekhala, who occupies the throne of the heart of good people and is pleased with Subramaniam's compositions.

प्रथमं दृश्यम्

माधव्याः अलंकृतचैत्ये वसन्तमाला माधवीं तस्याः सुतां मणिमेखलां च निन्दति सखीभावेन

षण्मुखप्रिया **आदि**

प० इन्द्रोत्सवसमये अन्तर्गृहे उपविष्टां पृच्छामि कथमिति

च० १ चन्द्रतारागणाइव सर्वालंकार भूषिताः
सुन्दरयोषितशातकाः नन्दन्ति इह वीथिषु
चन्दनमण्डितसुंदरदेहाः बंधनविमुक्तवृषभाः इव
इन्द्रप्रभावं प्रकटीकुर्वन्तः खेलन्ति नृत्यन्ति युवशातकाः

च० २ मद्दलमृदंगतालवाद्यैः प्रकटीकुर्वन्ति
सिद्धाः भवतोत्सवक्रियैरिति राजसेवकाः
उत्तमनर्तकीमणयस्तवशिष्याः इह
प्रस्तुवन्ति भरतं मुनिं नृत्यारंभविधौ

SCENE I

In Madhavi's decorated lounge, Vasantamala blames Madhavi and her daughter Manimekhala for not taking part in the Indrotsava.

Shamukhapriya *Adi*

P. I ask you both sitting at home during the festival, how and why you do this.

Ch. 1 Like moon and the stars, hundreds of beautiful maidens bedecked with all ornaments are playing in the streets. Hundreds of young men with their beautiful bodies adorned with sandal paste are playing and proclaiming Indra's glory like bulls released from bondage.

Ch. 2 With the beat of various drums they announce "Please get ready for the festivities". Top dancers, your students, are praying to sage Bharata before beginning their dances.

माधवी

आभोगि आदि

प० जानासि मे वृत्तान्तं सखी जानन्तयपि त्वं पृच्छसि कथम्

अ० नानाविधैः दुःखैस्ताडिताहम् नाटयं कथं भावयेऽधुना

च० भाग्यवशादाप्तकलाकौशलं दृष्ट्वा परिणीय मां गोपालो
अभाग्यवशादाप्तशापैर्मां त्यक्तवा बहिर्यातवान् तदा
ख्यातमहामधुरानगर्यां स्तेन इति खण्डितो मृतौ तेन
जातमहाशोकं कथं विस्मर्तुमर्हाहं सखी
धर्मपत्नी रुष्टा मधुरां
दग्धा पूर्णं दुर्गैव
कामपत्नी कथं निस्त्रपं
कामये उत्सव खेलीः

Madhavi

Abhogi *Adi*

P. You know my story and yet how can you ask me why.

A. I have been struck by various calamities and how can I think of dance ?

Ch. Pleased with my dancing talent (obtained by good fortune), Gopala married me ; because of the curses on me by my misfortune, he left me and went away ; in the famous city of Madurai he was condemned as a thief and executed ; How can I forget that shock and sorrow.

His lawfully wedded wife in her fury like **Durga** burnt Madurai without a trace.

How can I, his beloved, shamelessly desire to take part in the festivities.

वृत्तान्तमेतच्छ्रुत्वा, मणिमेखला अश्नुपुर्णेक्षणा
अश्नुधाराभि: करधृतपुष्पमालां स्नपयति ।

Hearing this story, Manimekhala's eyes are filled with tears and a shower of tears wets the garland in her hand.

अथ माधवी नवमालारचनार्थम्

उपायम् कथयति

हिन्दोलम् **आदि**

प० निर्माल्यं भूतां त्यज वत्से नवमालां रचय अधुना
अ० कर्मफलात्संभूतदुख:खकथाम् अश्नुभृतनयनै: श्रुत्वा
कल्मषी कृतां विसृज्य मालां, नवपुष्पै: रचय नवमालाम्

च० निस्सखा त्वं गन्तुमुपवनम्
नार्हसि वत्से उत्सवसमये
दुश्चरिता: सुरामत्ता: पुरुषा:
बहवो नगरे संचरन्त्यहो
सुचरितो आर्योऽपि दृष्ट्वा
सुंदरयौवनरूपं भ्रान्तो
वामाचाराश्रितमनसा
वांचति धर्मविहीनं वृत्तिम्
तस्मात् जाग्रत सखीं सुधामतिं
पुरस्करां कृत्वा याहि ।

Then Madhavi explains to her how to make a new garland.

Hindolam *Adi*

P. Throw away the soiled garland and make a new one now.

A. Hearing the sad story of our misfortune with tear filled eyes, you have soiled the garland. Leave it and make a new one with new flowers.

Ch. You cannot go to the Upavana unaccompanied during festival time. Many men of bad character roam the streets drunk. Even a good man seeing your youth and beauty may go mad and want to stray into a crooked path. Therefore, beware ! Go with friend Sudhamati in front of you.

ततः सुधामतिश्च हितवचनं कथयति

हमीर्कल्याणी आदि

प० उत्सवंविनाप्युन्मादयति उत्तममपि तव सुंदरयुवती

अ० अद्भुतरूपंमतियौवनमथ सर्वकलामयतेजोपुञ्जं
कृत्स्नभुवनदास्यकरं शक्ति वारितुं न शक्यं मनुजैः

च० उत्तमगुणशौर्यादि लावण्यभाग्यपूरितोऽपि
सिद्धसर्वार्थो युवराजोऽप्युदयकुमारोऽत्र
मत्तमानसो माधवीसुतां कामयतेंइति
प्रसिद्धमेव वृत्तान्तं चापि न विस्मर्तव्यं सुस्मिते ।

माधवी तदा मणिमेखलां सुधामतिं च आशिष्ट्वा उपवनं प्रेषयति ।

Then Sudhamati also gives advice.

Hamir Kalyani *Adi*

P. Even without a festival, your beautiful daughter will madden even a saint.

A. Her wonderful looks, her fresh youth, her shining effulgence as a master of the arts and her power to make the whole world her slave : men cannot withstand all that.

Ch. Though endowed with goodness, heroism and beauty, and having all he wants, the young prince Udayakumara is madly infatuated with Madhavi's daughter. This well-known piece of information should not be forgotten.

द्वितीयं दृश्यम्

उपवनं प्राप्तौ मणिमेखला सुधामतिश्च रथागमनरवं
श्रुत्वा चिन्तयतः, ततः मणिमेखला कथयति

अमृतवर्षिणी — रूपकम्

प० श्रान्तं मम मानसं सान्त्वय सुधामते

अ० सन्ततं श्रुत्वा युवराजकामितेति तम्
अन्तरंगे द्रष्टुमिच्छामि-अहम्

च० निन्दामि मम सुंदररूपम्
सुंदरराजकुमारार्चितम्
निन्दामि मम श्रान्तमानसम्
चिन्ताकुलां शाधि माम्

SCENE II

Having reached the Upavana, Manimekhala and Sudhamati, are puzzled at hearing the sounds of a chariot.

Then Manimekhala confides.

Amrutavarshini — *Roopakam*

P. To my confused mind, give peace, oh Sudhamati.

A. Hearing all the time that I am coveted by the Prince, my mind secretly wants to see him.

Ch. I blame my beauty—worshipped by that beautiful prince. I blame my confused mind. Teach me who is full of worries and doubts how to calm down.

उदयकुमरो सहसा तत्रागच्छति, मणिमेखला तु उपवनमध्यस्थदर्पणालंकृत-विहारं विशति, अथ उदयकुमारो सुधामतिं कथयति ।

परस् चतुस्र जंप

प० सौंदर्यनिकेतना मणिमेखलेत्यभिधाना
अत्रागता इति मम मित्रैः कथितोऽधुना

अ० पुरंधरसभामरणामूर्वशीं विजितभामा
संततं मम हृदि वसति शुभांगी इमा

च० क्रूरमात्रा बुद्धमार्गमाचरिता वृथा
पूर्णचन्द्रनिभाननां तामारोप्य मम रथे
रतिपूजाविधौ अर्चयामीति
प्रकटीकरोम्यधुना ।

Suddenly Prince Udayakumara comes there and Manimekhala enters the mirrored hall in the Vihara at the centre. Then Udayakumara tells Sudhamati.

Paras *Chatusra Jampa*

A. That abode of beauty, named Manimekhala comes here, so said my friend now.

P. She who has conquered Urvasi, the ornament of Indra's court, that beautiful limbed one lives always in my heart.

Ch. By her cruel mother, she was forced to become a Buddhist nun. I will take her, the moon-faced one on my Chariot and worship her according to the rites of Ratipooja. So I proclaim now.

सुधामतिः मणिमेखला किंचित् भयाक्रान्ताः परन्तु
सुधामतिः राजकुमारं कथयति ।

सुधामतिः

पन्तुवराली रूपकम्

प० चोलवंशतिलक तव पादधूलीं शिरसा वहन्ती अहं कथयामिते हितं
शृणु कृपया ।

अ० बालमृगिणीति मणिमेखलां न त्वं स्पृह खेलनात् सत्यं वदामि तव ।

च० ज्वालिततरुणाग्निसमा सर्वकलास्वीकृतापि
पालय तव जीवनं कुलधर्मं हितं च विभो ।

Both Sudhamati and Manimekhala are a little afraid but Sudhamati tells the Prince.

Pantuvarali *Roopakam*

P. Oh ! ornament of the Chola dynasty. I take the dust of your feet on my head and tell you what is good. Please listen.

A. Considering her to be a young doe, do not covet Manimekhala lightly. I tell you verily.

Ch. She is like a freshly lit fire, though learned in all the arts. Save your life, your royal customs and your own good.

ततः मणिमेखला राजकुमारं द्रष्टुं वातायनसमीपमायाता,

तस्याः अतिरूपलावण्यं प्रशंसन् उदयकुमारो गायति ।

काम्बोजि **आदि**

प० सृष्टा ब्रह्मणा सौंदर्यलक्षणं प्रकटीकरन्निव

अ० पुष्टांगा कमलायतनयना प्रफुल्लसरसिजवदना

सुग्रीवा कनककुंब युगलसमानस्तना कदलीसन्निभजघना

च० १ सर्वकलावशंकृतासमानचातुर्या, पूर्वपुण्याप्तालावण्यैस्तान् अतिप्रकाशकरा,

पार्वणचन्द्रसन्निभवदने भावनवप्रकाशनचतुरा

च० २ आलिंगनातुरकयुगलम् अप्रमादेन दमयन्नहम्

अर्चितुम् इच्छामि ताम् अर्चनार्हां देवताम्

कलिंगादिविजयादपि कलये तव विजयं गुरुतरम्

कामिते मणिमेखले देहि करावलंबं कृपया तव ।

Then Manikekhala comes near the window to look at Udayakumara.

Praising her wonderful beauty, he sings.

P. She is made by the creator as if to proclaim the grammar of beauty.

A. She has sound limbs, long lotus eyes, face like an open lotus, a fine neck, breasts like two golden pots, and thighs like the stems of the Kadali tree.

Ch. 1 : She has made all arts her own by peerless ability; with her beauty obtained by good deeds in the past, she presents them more powerfully and in her face like the full moon, she displays with ease all the nine rasas (emotions).

Ch. 2 : I control my two hands eager to embrace her and want to worship her as a revered Goddess. I consider winning you a greater victory than a victory over Kalinga. Oh coveted Manimekhala ! Lift me up by your hand with mercy.

एतच्छ्रुत्वा भ्रान्ता मणिमेखला अन्तर्गच्छाति, उदयकुमारस्तु
पुनरागच्छामि इति

गायन् याति

सौंदर्यदेवतां सर्वकलानामधिदेवतां

सत्यं नविस्मरामि इह पुनर्यास्यामि निश्चितम् ।

Hearing this, Manimekhala is confused and goes in. Udaya-kumara goes away saying he will come back.

That Goddess of beauty and presiding deity of the arts I will never forget and surely, I will come back here.

मणिमेखला

तोडि **आदि**

प० मिश्रितभावैः भिन्नमानसां सुस्मिते समुद्धर

अ० अश्रुपूर्णनयनास्मि, कारणं न ज्ञानामि न जानामि

पश्यन्ती युवराजं बिभेमि कदाचित् स्पृहामि कदाचित् ।

च० १ आश्रित बौद्धधर्म्मेण अरक्षितोऽहं भ्रान्ता

आतिचञ्चलचित्ताहम् अद्य विभेमि मानसं मम

स्पृहावती युवराजे इति मत्वा रुदन्ती

बृहद्रुषा स्वां निन्दन्ती तिष्ठामि क्लिष्टमानसा

च० २ केन कारणेनाशाक्रान्ता केन कारणेनास्मि भ्रान्ता

कस्मात्तं निन्दति वांचति च मनोममेति कां पृच्छामि ।

Thodi *Adi*

P. My mind is split by conflicting passions, oh smiling one ! pull me up.

A. My eyes are full of tears and I know not why. Seeing the young prince, I like him sometimes and I fear him at times.

Ch. 1 : I am not protected by the Buddhist path I adopted. I am confused. My mind is unsettled and I am afraid of it. I weep because I like the prince and with great anger I curse myself and I stand here perturbed.

Ch. 2 : For what reason am I struck with love ? Why am I confused ? Why does my mind like him and curse him ? Whom do I ask to get an answer ?

तत्समये अंबरात् तेजोमयविग्रहा मणिमेखलादेवता तत्रायाति, गायति च ।

सिंहेन्द्रमध्यमम् **आदि**

प० शरणं व्रज संबुद्धं धम्मं च संघं च भ्रमणं त्यज प्रशान्तमानसा भव भव

अ० तरुणे लतांगी वत्से ते भयं विसृज्य मां शृणु
करुणानिकेतनस्य पादपद्मौ दर्शयामि

च० निशायामागतेऽधुना नगरं विशन्तुम् नार्हसि
भृशमुन्मत्तमानसाः इतस्ततः चरन्त्यहो
असंशयं गृहीत्वा त्वाम् आनयामि द्वीपं
प्रशंसितं मणिपल्लवमिति बुद्धपादपूतम्
तद्दर्शनात् पूता धीरा
प्रत्यागमिष्यसीह ।

At that time, from the sky, Goddess Manimekhala of shining light comes down and sings.

Simhendra Madhayamam *Adi*

P. Take refuge in Buddha, Dhamma and Sangha and throw out your confusion and become peaceful.

A. Oh my young creeper-like darling ! Banish your fear and listen to me. I will show you the holy feet of the Abode of compassion.

Ch. : As the night falls. you cannot enter the city now. Men who are mad at heart move to and fro. Doubtless, I will take you and bring you to an island famed as Manipallavam and purified by Buddha's feet.

By that sight, purified and emboldened.

You will come back here.

तृतीयम् दृश्यम्

मणिपल्लवद्वीपे मणिमेखलादेवता, कुमार्यै

बुद्धपादयुगलं दर्शयति तत्प्रभावं वर्णयति च ।

ताबुभौ पादपद्मौ नमस्कृत्य गायन्ति

कलयाणि **आदि**

प० सत्वगुणाधिककल्याणं शाक्यमुने: पादयुगलं स्मरामि नमामि शरणं व्रजामि

अ० अद्भुतवत् इह संस्थापितम् आराधयामि अर्चामि सदा

च० तत्वनिबोधक धीर तथागत गुरुवरवरेण्य

मत्वा तव पादं पुन: पुनर्मनसि पूताहम्

श्रुत्वा प्रभावं तव प्रकाशं विशदोऽभूत् मम

दत्वा मां प्रशान्ति दयाप्रवाहं तव दर्शय ।

SCENE III

In Manipallavam island, Goddess Manimekhala shows Kumari Manimekhala, Buddha's holy feet and describes their power. Both bow down and sing.

Kalyani *Adi*

P. The two holy feet of Sakyamuni, auspicious with peaceful qualities, I remember, worship and take refuge in.

A. Wonderfully placed here, I worship the imprints always.

Ch. Oh hero in explaining the truth ! Thathagatha ! Greatest of teachers ! Thinking of your feet I am purified at heart. Hearing of your prowess, my mind has become clear. Give me peace of mind and show the flow of your mercy.

मणिमेखला तदा बुद्धदेवं प्रार्थयति

बींप्लास **आदि**

प० करुणावर्षात् आशिष्टाहम् कथं वर्णये तं ते

अ० तरुणयौवन भार्यां त्यक्त्वा तरुणेन्दुनिभ बालं त्यक्त्वा
अरुणाभवपुकान्ति चापि आर्यसत्यजिज्ञासयात्यज:

च० १ चरणयुगलस्मरणादपि जातो ममायं विशद: प्रकाशो
मरणजन्मभयात् विमुक्ता मत्पूर्वजन्ममपि जाने
भ्रमणकारणं जानेह् भर्ता उदयकुमारो पुरा
परिणिनाय मां लक्ष्मीनाम्नीं राहुलनाम्ना पूर्वजन्मे

च० २ प्रेमपाशान् विमोचय मां विमोचयोदयकुमारं
कामबद्धमुन्मत्तं तं कामाधिकात् विमोचय
क्षेमकरं पन्थानं तव दर्शयावां देशिक तव
नाममुच्चै: घोषन्तीं मा विस्मर मा विस्मर

Manimekhala then prays again to Lord Buddha and thanks him.

Bimplas *Adi*

P. I am blessed by your rain of mercy. How can I describe it.

A. Giving up a young wife, a son like the young moon, even the golden glow of your own body, you gave up, for the search of noble truths.

Ch. 1 : By the very thought of your two holy feet, my mind has become clear. I am freed from fear of birth and death and now I know even my past birth and the cause of my confusion. Udayakumara was my husband in my last birth when I was Lakshmi and he was Rahula.

Ch. 2 : Release me from the bonds of love and release Udayakumara. Release him, bound by love and lust from all that. Show your road of virtue to me and don't forget me who proclaims your name aloud.

अथ मणिमेखलादेवता स्वनामधारिण्यै कुमार्यै
अमृतसुरभी नाम अक्षयपात्रं दत्वा कथयति

सुरटी **आदि**

प० पात्रमिदं गृहीत्वा क्षुदितं बहुशातक जनायान्नं देहि

च० पात्रेण क्षुदार्दितानां वार्ताभि: कामार्दितानां

वारय दु:खं वर्णय धम्मं

कारय धम्मसंवर्धनम्

Goddess Manimekhala then gives her an Akshayapatra which gives food endlessly and tells her.

P. Take this vessel and give food to hundreds of people.

Ch. With this vessel remove the misery of the hungry and with your words remove the misery of those afflicted by lust.

Explain Dhamma and promote its growth.

चतुर्थं दृश्यम्

पुष्पपुर्यां पुनरागम्य मणिमेखला नगरमध्यस्थे महामण्डपे अक्षयपात्रेण
क्षुदर्दितजनानामन्नं ददाति ।

कुन्तलवराली **आदि**

प० आगच्छत हे क्षुत्पीडिता: अन्नं यथेच्छमास्वादयध्वम्

अ० रागादिशत्रून् निहन्तुमिच्छो शृणु रागहार्यसत्यानीह ।

च० दु:खमयं जीवनमिति सत्यं प्रथमं श्रुत्वा

दु:खकारणं तृष्णेति सत्यमपरं श्रृणुत

तृष्णानिहन्तारमार्गमष्टांगिकं ज्ञात्वा मनसि जना:

तृष्णादमनोद्यमेसदा योजयत यूयम् ।

SCENE IV

Returning to Poompahar, Manimekhala gives food to the hungry with her Akshaya Patra.

Kuntalavarali *Adi*

P. Come all, afflicted with hunger, take as much as you want.

A. Those who want to kill the enemies such as desire, listen to the noble truths.

Ch. The first truth is that life is full of misery ; the cause of misery is desire, that is the next truth and knowing in your heart the eightfold path of controlling desire, work hard always in this effort to control desire.

तदैव तत्रायतो उदयकुमारो उच्चैः हसन् तां पृच्छति

अटाना **आदि**

प० कापायांबरे काम्यरूपे कल्पित भिक्षुणीवेषे
भापणात् तृष्णाहरमार्गं घोषितबालगुरुवेषे

अ० भूषणहीने पुष्पपुरमहाभूषणे मृदुभापणे
वेषमिदं विहायाबद्धम् आयाहि मया राजगृहम् ।

च० तृष्णाहरणमार्यसत्यम् अष्टांगिकमार्गं च
तिष्टतु त्रिशंत्वर्षकालम् बौद्धविहारेषु
सौष्टवे यौवनकाले तान् विस्मर कामदेवं स्मर
दृष्टं सुखं विसृज्य परसुखे व्यर्थं जीवनं नार्पयेत् ।

Just then. Udayakumara comes there and laughing aloud, asks her.

Atana *Adi*

P. Oh Beautiful one wearing ochre robes in the guise of a Bhikkuni ! One who proclaims in the guise of a Guru, the path of warding off desire by your words !

A. One without ornament but the ornament of Poompuhar ! Oh soft-spoken lady ! Give up this absurd guise and come with me to the palace.

Ch. Curbing desire, noble truths and the eightfold path, let them all wait for 30 years in a Buddha Vihara. In your flushing youth, forget them and remember the God of love. One should not give up the known good and devote life in vain to the unseen good.

मणिमेखला तस्योत्तरं ददाति, वृद्धामेकां दर्शयति ।

हंसनादम् **चतुश्र जंप**

प० प्रत्यक्षं पश्यसीह यौवनरूपनाशम्

अ० सत्यं तथ्यं वदामि सर्वसिद्धार्थ

नित्यं तव हितम् इच्छन्तीं शृणु राजकुमार

च० कमलायत नयने मे कलुषितेऽन्धे भवतः

विमलं मे शर्म वृद्धगजशर्मायिते

कोमलगंभीरो मे गतिकुब्जागतिं सूयते

श्रीमन् विहायेतान् क्षेमकरं पन्थानं चर ।

Manimekhala replies pointing to an old woman.

Hamsanadham *Chatusra Jampa*

P. You see before your eyes the destruction of youth.

A. Oh prince who has everything ! I tell you what is good and true. Please listen to one who always wishes you well.

Ch. My lotus like eyes will become dark and blind. My clear skin will wrinkle like an old elephant, ! My beautiful dignified gait will give birth to the gait of a hunchback. Oh Noble Sir ! Leave all this and follow the path of your welfare.

ततः उदयकुमारो पुनरागमनं प्रकटीकुर्वन् गच्छति

वाचस्पति **आदि**

जाने न हितोपदेशम् ते जाने न तथ्यमष्टांगिकं मार्गम्

जानाम्यहं तव सौंदयगुणादिभिर्दासायितोऽहम्

आयाम्यहं निशीथे तव पादांघ्रिरेणुं शिरसा वहन्तुम्

श्रेयो कुलं चापि धम्मं विहाय तव दर्शनार्थी ।

Then Udayakumara proclaims he will come back and goes away.

Vachaspati *Adi*

I don't know about your advice and I don't know about the good eightfold path ; I know that to your beauty and charm, I have become a salve ; I will come at night, to bear

the dust of your feet on my head—giving up fame, family and custom just eager to see you.

A short interval follows with the lights dimmed, when the following verse is enacted.

(रात्रौ तृतीये यामे प्रेमाग्निचोदितो
उदयकुमरो तत्रायाति च तत्रास्थितेन
वैरीराज्यचारणेन हन्यते च ।)

गद्यम्

नादनामक्रिया **तालविहीनम्**

निशीथे विनिद्रो प्रेम्नोन्मत्तो
अनिरुद्धाशादग्धो राजाधिराजसुतो
प्रसीद मणिमेखलेति जपित्वा प्रस्थाय राजगृहात्
आकृष्टहस्तीव मणिमेखलाया: आवासं प्रतिगतो
अन्धैव तिमिरे स: अर्धमण्टपे तामाहूतवान् आशया
इतीतस्तत: चरन्तं कुमारं हन्तिस्म चारणो वैरीराज्यात्

(At night, in the third Jama, fired by his love Udayakumara comes back and is killed by an enemy agent.)

Nadanamakariya

At midnight, sleepless, maddened by love, burnt by uncontrolled desire, the son of the great King, mumbling, "Be kind to me, Manimekhala" starting from the palace, like a dragged elephant, went to the place of Manimekala (the City Square). Like a blind man in the dark, she called her forth. As he moved to and fro, an enemy agent, knived him to death.

पंचमं दृश्यम्

मणिमेखलां कारागृहे विसृज्य उदयकुमारमाता राज्ञी तां अतीव बाधति,
तपोबलेन तत्सर्वं विजित्य मेखला बौद्धधम्मप्रचारमारभति ।
सुधामति: मणिमेखलाप्रभावं प्रकटीकरोति ।

गद्यम्

आरभी तालविहीनम

अनलान्नदग्धा अनर्दिता अति क्षुत्पिपासया सा

कारागृहेकृतचित्रबाधादिभि: कञ्चिदपि न स्पृष्टा

तप्तचामीकरसन्निभा अनघा तपसा ज्वलन्ती इमा

तपसा च ज्ञानेन तथागतसमा आयति मणिमेखला

SCENE V

Throwing Manimekhala into prison, the Queen mother of Udayakumara (who holds her responsible for his death) tortures her. Conquering all that by her spiritual power, Manimekhala begins her propagandist work for Buddhism.

Sudhamati thus proclaims Manimekhala's greatness.

Gadya

Arabhi (*without rythm*)

Unburnt by fire, unaffected by great hunger and thirst, untouched by all the tortures inflicted on her in prison, she shines like heated gold with her austerities. Equal to Thathagatha in Tapas and knowledge, here comes Manimekhala.

पण्डिता: तां याचन्ते बुद्धप्रभावं कथयेति

पुन्नागवराली रूपकम्

कथय कथय रसने, कथां मारजित:

कथय कथामद्भुतां सुधारसपूरिताम्

कथय कथय तच्चरितं पुण्यभरितं

सत्वगुणोन्नतं समानरहितं

सन्मतिभि: पठितं सदयहृदयरसितम् ।

The Pandits then request her to tell them about Buddha's greatness.

Punnagavarali *Roopakam*

Tell us, Tell us, Wise One ! the story of the conqueror of Mara.

Tell us that wonderful story full of nectar.

Tell us that story full of good deeds, moved by Satva guna, that peerless story of the Compassionate One, read by good men.

मणिमेखला

तच्चरितं गायामि नृत्यामि च

यथा तस्य माता पितादय: तं वर्णिता: तथैव कथामभिनयामि

कल्याणी

अखण्डकल्याणगुणाभिरामस्वरूपामानन्दसांद्रम्

न शक्यते विज्ञातुं मयैति नानाविधैर्घोषिता:

माता च भार्या च पिता च तस्य शिष्योत्तमा: बान्धवाश्च

तमद्भुतं योगिराजेन्द्रराजं नरोत्तमम् वन्दे ।

Manimekhala

I will sing and dance that story. As his mother and father and others saw him and described him, so will I interpret the story.

अस्मिन्नन्तनर्टिके, मणिमेखला, नाट्यवर्णरूपेण

बुद्धचरितं गायन्त्यभिनयति, तस्य मातादिपात्रभावं वहन्ती ।

रागमालिका

भैरवी **आदि**

प० आगतं वीक्षन्ती अमिताभं तथागतप्रभावं तथापि न जाने न जाने

अ० नागकोटिगंभीरं नलगिरिमदहरधीरं नरवरम् अपारकृपासागरं

योगिनां चक्रवर्तिनं धर्मचक्रप्रवर्तिनं शाक्यसिंहमति

विख्यातं ब्रंह्मादिभिर्वंदितम् तम् ।

सावेरी **माया**

च० आगते लुंबिन्यांम् अतिहर्षसुधापूरितहृदया:

ताकतं तक्तं तकतम् इति नृत्यखेलीरता: वयं

आगतं मृगशिशुमालिंग्य मातृभाववशंगते मयि

रागपाशविमोचकमृगजातकं श्रावयति सखी
अनुकंपापूरिताहम् आगते पादपान्तिकम्
आगतो तथागतो अवतुं भुवनत्रयम्
आगतमालियंयन्ती अश्नुपुर्णनयना
नाहं तन्महिमानं वक्तुमर्हामि

In a solo dance drama (within a dance drama) Manimekhala takes on the roles of Buddha's mother, wife etc., and interprets Buddha's life through a Natya Varnam.

Ragamalika

Bhairavi *Adi*

P. Even seeing him with limitless light face to face, I don't understand the (full) greatness of the Thathagatha.

A. Him, majestic like a billion mountains, one who curbed the madness of elephant Nalagiri, the greatest among men, the shoreless ocean of mercy, the emperor of Yogis, one who set in motion the wheel of Dharma, one famous as the lion of the Sakyas, worshipped by Brahma and by other Gods.

Ch. 1 : (*Maya*) *Saveri*

As we came to Lumbini with our hearts filled with great joy, we were immersed in playful dance and I embraced a baby deer and felt like a mother to him when a Sakhi explained the Mruga Jataka story that releases men from bondage. Filled with compassion, I came near a tree, when the Thathagata was born to save the three worlds. Embracing him with tearful eyes, I cannot still explain his greatness.

(च२) **शुद्धोदनः**

सहाना

भाग्यपूर्णं इति मत्वाहं
भव इव षण्मुखजन्मना
शाक्यकुलोद्दीपनमार्तण्डं
सभायां दर्शितवान् तदा,
प्रभाकरं दृष्ट्वा च सिद्धाः

प्रकटीचक्रुरसौ भवेत्
भुवनत्रयविजेता सत्यं
भोगान् त्यत्वा योगविधौ
श्रुत्वैदं मिश्रित भावैः सुते घृताधिकवांचया
मत्वा तन्महोन्नतिच महाभ्रान्तोऽभवम् ।

Suddhodana (*Sahana*)

Ch. 2 : I considered myself very fortunate like Lord Siva with the birth of Shanmukha ; I showed the sun of the sakya clan in the palace hall ; the seers seeing this bright sun declared that he will surely conquer all the three worlds by abjuring pleasures and by yoga. Hearing this with mixed feelings, with my great love for my son and thinking of of his greatness, I became totally confused.

(च३) **चंदकः**

पन्तुवराली
भोगपूरितराजगृहात्वहिरायातो रथारुढो
शोकपूरितं लोकमिति ज्ञात्वा व्रतं धृतो
नाहं विरमे अप्राप्य नृदुःखवारणं मार्गम् इति
गेहं भार्यां शिशुं विहाय केशमपि छित्वा स्मितो ।
कोऽहं तं वाचा वर्णितुं कुमारशतसमानतेजसं भान्तम्

Chandaka (*Pantuvarali*)

Ch. 3 : He came out of the pleasure filled palace mounted on a chariot ; realized that the world was filled with misery and took a vow "I won't rest without discovering a way to remove human misery"—and leaving palace, wife and child, cut off his hair with a smile.

Who am I to describe him by word,
Him shining with the light of a hundred Kumaras !

(च४) **सुजाता**

केदारगौलम्
पुत्रवांचाप्रमत्ताधिकाहम् अत्र द्रुममूले क्षुदितं वीक्ष्य
तत्रैव तं प्रार्थ्य पायसं तस्यै दत्वा तमुज्जीवयामि स्म

चित्रमहो अतिचित्रमहो सिद्धार्थो इहागतो इति

मत्वा पुनस्तं पुष्पाञ्जलीभिरर्चयन्तीं देवगणाः

अर्चयन्त्यहो भाग्यमस्याः

अरहन्तमुज्जवियतुमिति

Sujata *Kedaragowlam*

Ch. 4 : Consumed by the desire for a son, I saw him hunger struck at the base of the tree ; I prayed to him and gave him payasam there itself and revived him. "Oh strange ! Passing strange that Siddhartha has come here." So thinking I worshipped him with flowers ; And strangely, enough an array of gods worshipped me saying "What great good fortune is hers to revive the Arahat !"

(च५) **आनन्दो**

धन्यासी

धन्यासमं मन्येऽहं तथागतं सेवितुं प्रतिदिनम्

मन्ये नरामरैर्वन्दितं तं धर्मस्वरूपम् अतिमानुपम्

तं बोधिमूले तपसा ज्वलन्तं

तमसार्णवपारदर्शकं

सिंहारव वचोभिःसनातनधर्म्मं सदा घोषयन्तं

संपूरयन्तं मेदिनीं सद्धर्मभापणैः कथाभिः

अहं वर्णये मत्भाग्याधिकस्वरूपं करुणार्णवम् इति

Ananda (*Dhanyasi*)

Ch. 5 : I consider myself most fortunate to serve Thathagata everyday. I consider him worshipped by men and Gods as the embodiment of Dharma and the superman. Him who shines with his tapas at the foot of the Bodhi tree, who shows the farther shore of the ocean of darkness, who proclaims the hoary Dharma with lion-like words and fills the world with his moral sermons and stories, I describe him as the embodiment of my great good fortune and an ocean of mercy.

भागेश्वरी

कंदर्पदर्पहरसुन्दरपतिं प्राप्यानन्दार्णवे मग्नमानसाँ त्यत्त्वा

बन्धविमोचकमार्गमन्वेषन् छंदकचारितरथे वनं

गतं कथं वर्णयेऽहम् करुणार्णवं वा वा निघृ'णं

कथं वर्णये तं पतिं वा गुरुं वा त्रैलोक्य भाग्यादिहागतं ।

Yasodhara (*Bhageswari*)

Ch 6 : Having obtained as husband one who humbled cupid with his beauty, I was immersed in an ocean of joy. He left me to seek the path of liberation in the chariot driven by Chandaka for the forest.

How do I describe him, cruel but an ocean of Mercy

How do I describe him, as my husband or a Guru, come here by the good fortune of the three worlds.

अन्ते मणिमेखला तिल्लानमेकं नृत्यति

आरभी आदि

तनत्तकिटतकतक तनत्तकिटतक तत्तरिकिटतक तत्तकजम्

तातक तज्जणु तत्तरिकिट किट तनंतकिट तनं तकिट तकजम्

अनुपमसुंदरनरवरम् आचार्यवरम् अरहन्तम्

विनुतं सुरनरपामरपण्डित सर्वजनैरनिशम्

तन तनतक्किट तां तकिट तक तत्तकजम् इति नृत्तैः

पुनः पुनः गायन्त्यभिनयैः प्रकटीकरोमि नित्यम्

At the end, Manimekhala dances a concluding Tillana.

Rythm words

Arabhi *Adi*

That unequalled beauty, that prince among men, that greatest of teachers, that Arahat, that One worshipped by gods, men, laymen and the learned, I proclaim, again and again, by song, Abhinaya and rythmic dance.

खेमांगुलीमालीयम्

Khema and Angulimala

The story used here is mostly my own creation though the theme of Angulimala's conversion is as old as the Nikayas. The original story in Buddhist literature portraying his conversion by Sariputta is beautiful in its own way but not so useful a basis for a dance-drama. Hence I introduced a confrontation between him and the noble Queen Khema, an ardent and early follower of Buddha. This has enriched danceability and dramatic interest in two ways, first by the introduction of a central female character and secondly, by the intense confrontation between the two with a gradual change of moods and Rasas. It is in line with Queen Khema's character, particularly her reported confrontation with Ajatasatru. I have heightened the effect of contrast and confrontation by intensifying the two characters, the nobility, fearlessness and self-confidence of Khema and the toughness and bravado of Angulimala. Khema had become an austere queen in the Nikayas but in my story, she keeps the pomp and prestige of royalty for ritual purposes.

The drama starts with the Pradhani or chief counsellor announcing in detail Angulimala's prowess as a dacoit-chief and giving him the news that queen Khema will be passing through the forest with her entourage and armed guards. Enraged at this proposed violation of his 'sovereignty', Angulimala threatens to send the guards quickly to the House of Death. As he exits from the stage, Queen Khema appears with her entourage and the guards who sing that Angulimala is scared to face them. He appears suddenly and chases them away and mocks at Queen Khema, now left helpless and alone. Khema declares that she is well protected by Buddha Dhamma and takes off her necklace and throws it—challenging Angulimala to pick it up. Each time he tries, he faces a hissing serpent as if by magic. While he stands frustrated, Khema softens him up—contrasting his noble appearance and his horrible occupation. He then explains how he was born a prince, and was illtreated by the new queen when his own

mother died and how, embitterd he became and turned to dacoity. Khema then explains the greatness of Buddha's teachings and his emphasis on non-attachment and compassion. Frustrated and softened, Angulimala is now converted and offers to cut off his own finger as a measure of repentance, when Khema stops him. The guards now come in with reinforcements to capture Angulimala when Khema stops them too, explaining his conversion. A new-born Angulimala leaves the stage ecstatically singing the praises of Buddha and Khema.

खेमाँगुलीमालीयम्

सुब्रह्मण्यकृतं नृत्यनाटकमिदं पूर्णं

निविडवनमध्ये (इव) नाट्यते

"*Khema and Angulimala*", a dance drama by Prof. V. Subramaniam is enacted (as if) in the centre of a thick forest.

नान्दी

आहिरी **आदि**

प० धम्मसेनापतिं दुर्मतिनाशकं शाक्यसिंहमहं गायामि

अ० कम्मबन्धच्छेदकम् अस्पर्शयोगं सर्वसम्मंत दर्शितम्

च० जन्मभूमिं कृतं पावनं सन्मार्गप्रचारचातुरं वीरेषु

अग्रगण्यम् अचिन्त्यतेजसं सुब्रह्मण्यगीतैराराधितम् ।

Prayer

Ahiri *Adi*

P. I sing of the general of the Dharma (army), the destroyer of evil thoughts and the lion of the Sakyas.

A. Of Him who breaks the bonds of Karma and who taught the way of non-attachment.

Ch. Of Him who purified the land he was born, who was expert in spreading the good path, the first among heroes, one of great effulgence, worshipped by Subramaniam's songs.

निबिडवनमध्ये तस्करपतेः अगंलीमालस्य कीर्तिवचनं
गायन्नभिनयति, तस्य मुख्यप्रधानी ।

भेगड आदि

प० अकुण्ठिततस्कराणां पतिरायात्यधुना

अ० पण्डितस्तेनानां मण्डितांगुलीमालो
चण्डमारुतसन्निभवेगो पिण्डीकृतवैरीसमूहो ।

च० मृगेन्द्रसन्निभघोरगर्जको, सुरेन्द्रसूनुसन्निभबाणवर्षको
नरेन्द्रसेवकानां भयप्रदतमो गजेन्द्रसन्निभगमनगंभीरो
तनत्तकत्तकत्तिमि तनत्तकिटनकतनन्ता तनन्ता
तत्तरिकिटकिट तनत्तकिटतक तनत्तीं ता ता
जगतणु तरिकिट ताता तिमित्त तकतिमित्ता।
तीं तक्क तकिटत्तकतिमि तनंता तनं ता ।

In the midst of the dense forest, the chief consellor of the dacoit chieftain Angulimala sings his praises announcing his arrival.

Begada *Adi*

P. Now comes here, the lord of dacoits—the unopposed.

A. The wisest among dacoits, wearing a garland of fingers, fast as the whirlwind, one who has made mincemeat of his enemies.

Ch. His voice is like the lion's roar ; he showers arrows like Ạrjuna ; he strikes fear into the hearts of the King's servants—and he walks majestically like an elephant.

अंगुलीमालो अत्रायाति, प्रधानी तत्प्रशस्ति घोषयति

(गद्य-दण्डक)

अटाना

अंगुलीमालालंकृतोरं भयंकरं गंभीरं तस्कर धीराधिधीरम्
अर्कसन्निभदाहकनयनैरुग्रदृष्टिकिरणान् वितरन्तं विध्वंसकरं वनचरंतम्

कर्कशवचनैः काननमार्गे आगतान् पथिकान् तर्जयन्तं दारुणं तम्
सिंहनादनिभगर्जनापुरस्कारं प्रभूताकारं भीकरं क्रूरम्
करधृतशरचापलोलं अकुण्ठितबाणजालं अरिखण्डनखड्गकरालं
करे धरन्तं महारवं तम्
कालानलज्वालासमभासिताक्षियुगलं हालाहलसन्निभभीकर कृष्णकेशपुंजम्
मालाकृतक्षतशतांगुलीं महोरं शूरं शूलायुधधरकालाग्निरुद्रसमानभयानकं
वंदे तमायान्तम् वन्दे तमायान्तम् वन्दे तमायान्तम् ।

Angulimala enters as His chief counsellor announces him.
Atana (Dandaka)

With his chest adorned by a garland of human fingers; fearsome and impressive;

With eyes darting forth rays like the scorching sun; the forest-king, the destroyer;

With harsh words, threatening the travellers in the woods, producing horror;

Preceded by his lion-like roar, big-bodied, cruel and fearsome;

Carrying lightly his bow and arrows—showering arrows unstoppable, with a sword to cut his enemies in his hand and with a loud voice;

With two eyes shining like the mighty fire,

With hair dark as the Hala-hala poison,

With the garland of fingers on his broad chest,

Bearing a trident, awesome, like the Rudra at the end of the world;

To Him that comes thus—Salutations !

प्रधानी च मालश्च संभाषन्तः इतस्ततः चरतः

आनन्द भैरवी **आदि**

प्रधानी : श्रूयते कोसलेश्वरराज्ञी आयातीह
शूरसमूहैः परिवृता क्रूरप्रहरणायुधधरैः

माण्ड्

माल : आयान्त्वायान्त्विह आयुधधरशातकवीरा:

भूयात्तेषां यमालये पूर्णम् अथितिसत्कारम् ।

कानडा

प्रधानी : जाग्रतो भव स्तेनपते इषुधिमते तस्कराणां पते क्रूरतमान् वंचनापरा-
निति विद्धि तान् राजसेनाशूरान् ।

कल्याणी

माल : जानामि राजशूरान् जानाम्यहम् अतिक्रूरान्

नानाविधैरुपायै: नरहत्तिकरप्रवीणान् (इति)

सर्पान् स्यालान् नराधमानन्तकाय

अर्पये ताण्डैव: तोषये त्र्यंबकम् ।

The chief counsellor and Mala converse walking together.

Ananda Bhairavi *Adi*

Coun: I hear that the queen of Kosala is coming here surrounded by warriors bearing powerful weapons.

Maand

Mala : Let them come, hundreds of armed warriors ; Let them all get first-class guest treatment in the house of Death.

Kanada

Coun : Be careful, Lord of dacoits bearing a bow ; please know that the King's men are cruel and cunning.

Kalyani

Mala : I know the King's men are very cruel and expert in killing men by many devices ; those serpents and jackals, the scum of the earth, I will offer to Death and please Lord Siva with Tandava dances.

अंगुलीमालस्तस्य प्रधानी बहिर्गच्छन्ति, परिवारै: सह ।

पल्लकीभूता राज्ञी तत्रायाति, परिवारजना: गायन्ति ।

कल्याणी आदि

प० नंत नत नंत नंत नंतनम् तनम् । तानं तनं तनन्तनम्

तन तन तन तन तन तन तानत्तनात्तना

तदिगिण गिण गिण गिण गिण गिण गिण गिण तोम् ।

प० आयाति अखिलभुवनराजराजपत्नी खेमेति नाम्नी भामिनी ।

अ० मायासुतबुद्धेन्द्रशिष्यावरा जाया कोसलेश्वरप्रसेनजितः

च० तुंगमानसा सर्वलोकाभिमता संघराजपूजकानां वरा

अभंगधम्मप्रचारपण्डिता सिंहसन्निभ सेवकैरावृता

नन्दिता सुरक्षिता वन्दिता नगो नगेति गायत् पल्लकी धरैः ।

Angulimala and his counsellor exit ; born on a palanquin and surrounded by guards, Queen Khema arrives. The bearers sing.

Kalyani *Adi*

Rythm words.

P. Here comes, the queen of the king of all the world Khema, shining.

A. The favoured disciple of Buddha, son of Maya, and wife of Prasenajit, Lord of Kosala.

Ch. High-minded, respected by all the world, leader of the worshippers of Buddha, expert in propagating the eternal Dhamma, surrounded by lion-like guards, well-protected and borne by bearers singing Nago Nago.

राज्ञी खेमा अवतरति, सेवकाः चामरादिभिस्तां शुश्रूषन्ते ।

पुनस्ते गायन्ति नृत्यन्ति च ।

कुन्तलवराली आदि

कोसलेश्वर सैनिक पराक्रम भिया

नायत्यंगुलिमालो नायातीह

तदनतरिकिट तनत्तकिट तकजम् जम्

तकजणु तरिकिट तकतिमि तकजम् जम् ।

सहसा गंभीरगर्जनैः सह अंगुलीमालो तत्रायाति खड्गधरो

शूलपाणिः। अतीव भ्रान्ताः सर्वे सैनिकाः पलायन्ति ।

Queen Khema gets down : the guards serve her with chamaras, sing and dance.

Kuntalavarali *Adi*

Out of fear for the soldiers of the Kosala King, Angulimala does not come here, not here.

Suddenly with a roar, appears Angulimala, flashing his sword and his trident. Thunderstruck and confused, the guards run away.

उच्चैः हसन् अंगुलीमालो गायन्नृत्यति

पुन्नागवराली **आदि**

प० अखिलभुवनराजराजपत्नी अहो आवृतैः तिरस्कृता अनाथा

अ० शिखीसमगंभीरा ममताभृता सेवकैर्वीता निष्पतत्रा (भूता)

च० कुत्र ते चातुरंगसेना वद कुत्र ते श्वेतसम्राज्यछत्रम्

अत्र मामकुण्ठितं चक्रवर्तिनं रुद्रसन्निभं तस्कराणां पतिं

छत्रिणं निरोद्धुं शक्तिमान् भुवि कुत्रापि नास्तीति विद्धि राजिते ।

Laughing aloud, Angulimala sings and dances, round Khema.

Punnagavarali *Adi*

P. Alas ! the Queen of the king of the world has been deserted by her entourage and left alone !

A. Majestic like the peacock, proud, left by the guards, she has shed all her feathers !

Ch. Tell me where is your four-limbed (chaturanga) army ? Where is your imperial Umbrella ? Know that I am unopposed emperor here, like Rudra—and there is none strong enough to stop me.

शान्तमुखी मंदहासेन खेमा कथयति ।

शुद्धसावेरी रूपकं

प० सुरक्षिताहम् शुद्धोदनसुतेन

अ० करधृतकरवालैः करालैशूरैः तिरस्कृतापि त्रिपीटकांकित धम्मेन

च० अरातिनाशकर अस्पर्शयोगेनाधुना किरातकसम्मोहनकरैः कीर्तितवाक्यैः
निरायुधापि सुरक्षिता नराधम पश्याधुना ।

इति वदन्ती रत्नमालां ग्रीवात् अपहाय भूमौ क्षिष्यति ।

Calm and with a smile Khema replies.

Suddha Saveri *Roopakam*

P. I am well protected by Lord Buddha.

A. Even when I am deserted by warriors with swords, I am protected by the Dhamma of the Tripitaka.

Ch. By the yoga of non-attachment, which destroys (internal) enemies, by the famous words (of Buddha) which charm even assasins, unarmed, I am well protected ; see for yourself you Devil !

So saying, she takes off her rich necklace and throws it down.

रत्नमालां ग्रहीतुमंगुलीमालः आयाति परंतु कृष्णसर्पमेकं तत्स्थाने पश्यति ।

रत्नमालां स्पर्शितुमशक्तम् अंगुलीमालं दृष्ट्वा करुणया खेमा कथयति ।

परस् आदि

प० राजगंभीर कुमार राजितपूर्णचन्द्रवक्त्र
आश्रिता नृशंसवृत्तिः कथं त्वयेति कथय ।

अ० भजसि स्तेनघोरवृत्ति वहसि भीकरां मालाँ
तेजसा मुखलावण्येन दृश्यसे आर्यवंशी ।

च० दारुणैर्वचोभिस्तर्जनं कुरुषे (परन्तु)
आरुणनेत्रयुगले तव कारुण्यं दृश्यते गुह्यम् ।

Angulimala rushes to take the necklace thrice but sees a king Cobra in its place, every time.

Seeing Angulimala's unsuccessful efforts to touch the necklace, Khema says in all mercy.

Paras *Adi*

P. Young man ! majestic like a prince with a face like the full moon ! How did you come to take up this cruel occupation ?

A. You have taken up fearsome dacoity ; you wear a horrifying garland but your bright and beautiful face shows that you are of royal birth.

Ch. You threaten with fearful words but your red eyes hide a lot of compassion.

करुणाभूतवाक्यमिदं श्रुत्वा मृदुलायितहृदयोऽगुंलीमाल· कथयति ।

नाटकुरंजि आदि

प० पृच्छसि मामिह कथमभवमिति तस्कराणां चक्रवर्ती ।

अ० स्वेच्छया यदृच्छया वा स्नेहबलद्वा द्रोहमुखाद्वा ।

च० १ जातो नाहं तस्करवंशे जातोऽहं क्षिशीशकुले

यातोऽहमिह स्तेनपतित्वं याते मातरि मे दिवम् ।

च० २ राज्ञी कनिष्ठा नवमाता राक्षसी संभूता

आज्ञापिता सा अश्वागारमार्जको भवेति

अश्वारुढा प्रत्यहं कर्कशवचनैर्निन्दन्ती

अश्वरश्मीभिराक्रोपेण अहन्यहनि मां ताडिता ।

च० ३ कठिनहृद्भूषणो कठिनबाणवर्षको

कठिनतीक्ष्णासिना खण्डितनरांगुलीन्

मण्डनं धरामि राजसेवकान् गर्जनैः

खण्डनं करोमि तान् पिण्डीकरणातुरो ।

Moved by her soft compassionate words, Mala tells his story.

Nata Kuranji *Adi*

P. You ask me how I became an emperor of dacoits.

A. By my own free will or by accident, by friendship or by someone's treachery.

Ch. I was not born to a thief. I was born in a royal family; I became a thief, when my mother passed away.

Ch. 2. The younger queen, my step-mother, became a devil and ordered me to be the caretaker of the stables. Riding a horse, she cursed me and whipped me with a horsewhip everyday.

Ch. 3. A hard heart is my ornament. I shower hard-tipped arrows ; I cut off men's fingers with a sharp sword and wear them. I threaten the King's men with my roar and am eager to make mincemeat of them.

अथ खेमा तस्य हितोपदेशं करोति ।

आभोगि **आदि**

राजवंशोद्भव नीचमार्गाश्रित सादरं श्रृणु मे वाचं

राजपन्थानं विहायात्र नीचपन्थानम् उपास्ते किम् ।

Khema then starts advising him

Abhogi *Adi*

Oh royal prince following an evil path, listen to my words ! why do you forsake the royal path to follow an evil path ?

किंचित् रुष्टोऽगुंलीमाल: परिहासेन सह कथयति ।

कमास् **आदि**

प० राजवृत्तिप्रशंसया अलं मूढे ।

अ० राजवृत्तिं च स्तेनवृत्तिं च राज्ञी मन्येऽहम तुल्यम् ।

च० धर्मचरं राजानं दण्डधरं वर्णयति शास्त्रम्

कर्मचरो तस्करो दण्डम् उपास्ते शास्त्रज्ञानं विना ।

धर्मे विदितं शुल्कमिति नृपो हरति प्रजानां धनं

तमेवापहरति स्तेनो धम्मपठनं विना ।

Slightly irritated, Angulimala replies.

Kamas *Adi*

P. Don't praise the royal occupation, Fool !

A. I consider a dacoit's and a King's occupation the same,

Ch. The sacred books describe a righteous king as employing violence. The dacoit does it without knowing the books. The king takes people's money as tax prescribed by texts. The dacoit does it without reading the texts.

खेमा शान्ता सुस्मिता प्रत्युत्तरं ददाति

हिन्दोलम् आदि

प० प्रज्ञावादान् भाषसे त्वम् अज्ञानर्णवमग्न वत्स ।

अ० विख्यातं संघराजमार्गं विवरणोत्सुकोऽहम्

दुःखावृतनृपवृत्ति नाहम् उत्तममिति वक्ष्यामि वत्स ।

च० अक्कोधेन जिने कोधम् असाधुं साधुना जिनेति

विख्यातं तं महावाक्यं विनिस्थापय हृदि तव

सख्यं कुरु सर्वजनैः सह त्वं शरणं व्रज सत्वरं त्रयम्

शाक्यमुनेः राजमार्गमाचर चक्रवर्ती भव भव ।

Calm and smiling Khema replies.

Hindolam *Adi*

P. You talk cleverly—but you are immersed in an ocean of ignorance.

A. I want to explain the famous path of Buddha. I do not want to say that an anxiety-laden King's life is the best.

Ch. "Conquer hate (anger) with love ; evil with good".

Establish that famous great saying in your heart. Make friends of all ; take refuge in the three great things. Follow the royal path of Buddha and become an emperor.

पश्चात्तापेन भरितः अश्रुपूर्णाकुलाक्षः अंगुलीमालः कथयति ।

सुरटी आदि

विगतो मोहो विश्ववंद्ये मातुस्तववचनैः

इहातगुरुवरे तवपादे समर्पये ममांगुलीन् ।

इति ब्रुवन् खड्गमुद्धरति, खेमा,

अतित्वरेण सह तन्निवारयति, तत्समये बहवः सैनिकाः तत्रागच्छन्ति

अंगुलीमालं बन्धितुमुद्यताः । खेमा तान् निवार्य कथयति ।

मध्यमावती

नीचवृत्तिपरित्यक्तं मानुषं तापपूरितं
पुनर्भूतमिवाहं तं मन्ये सन्मार्गचारिणं
बुद्धदेवोऽपि तं क्षन्त्वा ददाति पूर्णमाशिषं
बुद्धं धम्मं च संघं च गच्छामः शरणत्रयम् ।

With tear-filled eyes repentant Angulimala says.

Surati *Adi*

My confusion is gone. Oh Revered by all ! Through your motherly advice.

Oh my Guru. Accept my fingers !

So saying he lifts his sword to cut off his fingers. Khema quickly stops him. Khema's soldiers suddenly return in bigger numbers to catch Angulimala. Khema stops them and says.

Madhyamavati

The man who has left his evil ways, repentant,

I consider him reborn. Lord Buddha will forgive him and confer his blessing on him. We take refuge in Buddha, Sangha and Dhamma.

खेमा च अंगुलीमालः शरणत्रयं गायन्ति, अथ मालः गायन्नृत्यन्
बहिर्याति, खेमा च सर्वे, तिल्लानं नृत्यन्ति ।

अंगुलीमालः : वीतमोहोऽहं जातहर्षेण भूतजानेन नृत्याम्यहम्
नीतसन्मार्गो खेमाराज्ञया तां बुद्धदेवं च गायाम्यहम् ।

नलिनकान्ति खण्डजाति त्रिपुट

तक्कत्तरिकिट तक्कत्तरिकिट तनत्तकत्तिमि तकजं जं
तत्तकजं तकजं दिमित्त तकजणु जणुत्ततकतिमि तरिकिटजम्

नलिनाभकान्तिधरो नरवरो
नलगिरिमदहरो नागनुतो
संघधम्मस्थापको शान्तिदो
स्पुरतु मे मानसि संततम् ।

तत्तक तकतिमि तैं तैं तैं ता तैं तैं तैयतैयतैं । तक्कत्तकतिमि तकिटत्त-
कतिमि तनं तनं तक तैं तैं तैं तैं ।

Khema and Angulimala say the Saranatraya. Then Mala leaves in ecstacy singing and dancing.

Madhyamavati *Adi*

Without confusion, with new wisdom and joy of rebirth, I dance. Led into the right path by Queen Khema, I sing of her and Buddha.

The others dance a Tillana.

Nalinakanti *Khanda Jati Triputa*

Rythm words.

That one who has the brightness of a lotus, greatest among men, one who subdued Nalagiri, one worshipped by Nagas, the founder of Dhamma and Sangha, the giver of peace, may he (dance) throb in my heart always !

महा कन्या संघ नाटकम्

श्री सुब्रह्मण्येन विरचितम् नृत्यनाटकम्

Maha Kanya Sangha, a dance drama by V. Subramaniam

This is an intellectual dance-drama based completely on my imagination. In the first Maha Sangha held by Buddha's disciples after his Maha Parinirvana in Kusinagara, his close disciple Ananda was humiliated by Upali. This was apparently the result of the dominance of the intellectual faction stressing Buddha's rationality and non-attachment in preference to his great compassion.

In this dance-drama I am trying to set right the wrong done to Ananda by an imaginary Sangha held by the great women who were influenced by Buddha in some way. Ananda, frustrated at the end of the first Maha Sangha pours out his heart to Gotami, Buddha's foster-mother, who agrees with him that compassion was His greatest gift. She calls by her yoga-maya the women who played a part in Buddha's life to bear witness to it. Finally Upali and Gotami predict the influence of Buddhism in both ways, and all of them sing and dance a Tillana.

नान्दी

पचंघनरागमालिका आदि

आरभी

प० वंदे शाक्यमुनीन्द्रवरं आनन्दकर अष्टांगिक पंथानं दर्शयन्तम्

अ० इन्दीवरनिभनयनयुगांकितसुन्दरं बंधमोचकम्

च० सुन्दरयोषितपूरितराजगृहं त्यजन्तं धीरं तं (वराली)

बंधमोचक पंथानमन्वेषयन्तम् अतुलितं (नाट)

वंदितबोधिपादपमूले चिन्तयन्तं श्रीकरं (श्रीः)

दुःखान्तकार्यसत्यचतुष्टयं घोषन्तम् (गौल)

Prayer

Panchaghana Ragamalik

Arabhi *Adi*

P. I bow down to Sakyamuni, the greatest of saints, the one who showed the joyful eightfold path.

A. Him, beautiful with two eyes like Indivara flowers, the releaser from bondage.

Ch. Him, who bravely left the palace filled with pretty women (Varali).

Him, who sought the path of release from bondage, the Peerless (Nata).

Him who contemplated at the foot of the Bodhi tree. (Sri Raga).

Him who proclaimed the four noble truths for ending human misery (Gaula).

महाकन्यासंघनाटकम्

कुसिनगरान्तिके भिक्कुणां महासंघस्यान्ते सर्वे भिक्कवः
शरणत्रयं गायन्तः बहिर्यान्ति, परन्तु उपालिनः
उदासीनेन भग्नमानसो बुद्धदेवस्य अन्तिकशिष्यो आनन्दो गुरुदेवप्रभावं गायति ।

जयजयवन्ती रूपकं

करुणारसपरिपूर्ण, करुणामृतवर्षण,

करुणालंकृतनयन, करुणामृतवचन,

करुणास्वरूपधर करुणार्णव धीर,

करुणाभरण त्वां शरणंगत शिष्टैः

करुणाविभवो कथं विस्मतुं महों ।

The great Sangha of Bhikkus near Kusinagara is over and the Bhikkus come out saying the three saranas. But hurt by Upali's insults, Buddha's close disciple Ananda goes alone and sings the praises of Buddha's compassion.

Jayajayawanti *Roopakam*

You are filled with the essence of compassion, you rain the nectar of Mercy ; your eyes are adorned by it, your speech is full of it, you are its embodiment, you are an ocean of compassion, you, are ornamented by it; How can the learned who have taken refuge in you, forget the glory of it ?

उपालिनः उदासीनेन अतिदुःखपूरितो आनन्दो पुनः विलपति ।

Ananda, insulted by Upali, again complains aloud with a heavy heart.

वराली रूपकं

प० तिरस्कृतोऽहं तीव्रजितेन्द्रियनेतृकैरधुना

अ० तिरस्कृतपंचाभोगिवर, गुरुवर

तिरस्कृतवैशालीराजस्वागत करुणागंभीर

च० पुरस्कृतोऽहं सदा भवन्तमिति

पूरितवचनामृतकर्णोति

विचारणार्थमाश्रिताः मे

विद्वांसः तर्कातिचातुराः

विहाय करुणां वीतानुकंपाः सहायमिच्छन्ति संसृतेः मे ।

Varali *Roopakam*

P. I am pushed aside by the leaders of the austerity—school, now.

A. Oh greatest of Gurus, you rejected the five puritan sages and you rejected the invitation of the city elders of Vaisali out of compassion (for Ambapali).

Ch. As I was always with you, and filled my ears with your words like nectar, these pandits versed in logic seek me ; they forget compassion and seek (only) the help of my memory.

तत्समये तत्रागतां मातरं गौतमीं प्रणम्य आनन्दो कथयति ।

At that time Gotami (Buddha's foster-Mother) comes and Ananda explains his woes to her.

नवरसकन्नेडा **आदि**

प० एहि गौतमी मातस्तव वचनैः देहि शान्ति मे ।

अ० ब्रूहि पावनी गरीयो तर्कवाचो वा दयार्द्र हृदयो वा ।

च० मूखं सहे कथम् अभोगिनां दूषणं प्रत्यहम्

नाहं करुणामृतमग्नो तर्कविज्ञाने (तान्) विजेतुं

शक्नुयां परन्तु शाक्यमुनेरनुकंपामार्गम्

आख्यातुमिच्छामि मातः आशिषं देहि ।

Navarasa Kannada *Adi*

P. Come Mother Gotami, give me peace (of mind) with your words.

A. Tell me, Holy one, which is superior, logic and dispute or a kind heart.

Ch. How can I bear silently this abuse every day. I am filled with kindness and cannot win over them in logical disputation. But I want to explain and propagate Buddha's path of mercy. Give me your blessings.

प्रचारणोत्सुका गौतमी उत्साहेन घोषति ।

साम **आदि**

प० शाक्यमुनेरनुकंपामार्गं सत्वरं प्रकटी कर्तुम्

आह्वयेऽहं साक्षीभूतान् अत्युत्तम नारीरत्नान्

च० आह्वये मायां राज्ञीं महनीयां मातरं
आह्वये महितां सुजातां अंबां नवरसेश्वरीं
आह्वये भागेश्वरीं यशोधरां प्रियां
शाक्यसिंहकृपाप्रभावं व्याख्यतुमत्र ।

Filled with missionary zeal for propagating the path of compassion, Gotami proclaims.

Sama *Adi*

P. That path of compassion of Sakyamuni, to spread it fast, I will call all those who bore witness to it, the great gems of women.

Ch. I will call Queen Maya, the revered mother, I will call the respected Sujata, Amba the mistress of nine rasas, and Yasodhara his dear wife—all to explain the glory of his compassion here.

गौतमी तदा ध्यानमग्ना बुद्धदेवकरुणापात्रा:
सर्वा: महाकन्या: आव्हयति ।
तदा स्वर्गीय राज्ञी माया, सुजाता, अंबापाली,
यशोधरा च क्रमेणागम्य
शाक्यमुने: कृपावैभवं कथयन्ति
नृत्यन्ति च ।

रागमालिका वर्णम्

कल्याणी **आदि**

प० योगिनां चक्रवर्ती विजयते धम्मचक्कप्रवर्ती ।

च० (माया) नागरूपमाधाय मम निशि
भागधेयमिव पार्श्वमाविशन्
आगते मयि पादपान्तिकम्
आगतो अमिताभो लुम्बिन्याम्
तनत्तकिटतकतरन्ना तिरन्ना
तत्तकतकविमि तनत्तकिटतिमिताना

तनं तनं तक तत्तरिकिट तिरना, तन्ना तरन्ना तेंदाना ।

च० मृगराजरूपेण स्वां प्रेपितो नृप

मांसाशां तोषितुं मृगिणीं

गर्भवतीं त्रातुम् आगतो

त्रातुं भुवनत्रयम् असौ

तातक्क तकतिमि तक्क तत्तक तकतिमि तिरन्ना

तनत्तिमि दिनत्तक दत्तित्तलांगु ताना

तातक तकतिमि तनन्त तकतिमि ताना

दिनत्तकिटतक ताना तेन्दाना तिल्लाना (यो)

Maya

Kalyani *Adi*

P. That Emperor of Yogis is victorious !

That one who turned the wheel of Dhamma is victorious !

Ch. 1. Taking the guise of an elephant at night, as my good fortune, he entered my side ; when I came near a tree in Lumbini, he came (out) with limitless light !

Ch. **2**. He sent himself (once) as the king of deer, to please the craving for meat of a king and to save a pregnant doe. He has now come to save the three worlds.

सुजाता

देष्

च० भाग्यपूरिते भारतदेशे

भाग्यान्ममायातो

शाक्यमुनिर्दुग्धं पातुं

भाग्यान् मानवानाम्

तनन्ता तत्तक्कत्तरिकिट दिनत्ता तत्तक तकतिमि तातक तिमिकिट ता ता

दिनत्तकिटतक तिरन्ना तिरन्ना दित्तलांगु तक ताना तरन्ना ।

Sujata

Desh

Ch. 3. In Bharata desa, greatly blessed, he came here by my good fortune : the great Sakyamuni came to drink milk—by the good fortune of all men.

पंचाभोगिनस्त्यत्त्वा देवो
निरंजरतीरे निस्स्मृतिर्गतो
दत्तं दुग्धं पीत्वा व्रतं
धृतो नृदुःखवारणाय ।
तत्तरिकिट तकतिमि तत्तक्कतकतिमि तनन्ता
दत्तिलांगु तकतिमि ता ता तक्क तक्क तरिकिटता
दिनत्तकिट तक दिनत्तकिट तक तानं तना
तनं तनं तक तरन्ना तक तिरन्ना तन ताना (यो)

Ch. 4. The Great one left the five Puritans and came to the banks of the Neranjara river and fainted. He drank the milk given by me and took a vow to remove the misery of human beings.

अंबापाली

सिहेन्द्रमध्यमम्

च० ५ सिहेन्द्रसन्निभं प्रभुं धम्माथितेयीकरन्तं च्युतां
ब्रह्मादिभिर्वंदितं कथम् अहं वर्णये कारुण्यांबुधिम्
दिनत्तकिटतक दिनत्तकिटतक दिनत्तकिटतक तिरन्ना
दित्तालांगुतक दलांगुतकतिमि तरन्ना तरन्ना
तत्तक्क तकतिमितक्क तंदाना तिल्लाना
तनत्तनत्तक तनत्तनत्तक दृक्तोम् तिरन्ना

Ambapali

Simhendra Madhyamam

Ch. 5. That Lord, like a king of Lions who made me, the fallen one, an honoured hostess, one worshipped by all the Gods, How can I describe that ocean of Mercy !

वैशालीप्रमुखोपचारं त्यजन्
विशालायताक्षो महान् सुन्दरो
इहागतो पावनं कृतो मे
गेहं करुणार्णवो
तां तक्कतकतिमि ददिगिण गिण गिण तोम्
तत्तरिकिट तक तिमि तक्क तत्तोम्
तनं तकिट तोम् तन तोम् तोम् धृक्तोम्
तिमि तक्क तक्क तक्क तदिगिण गिण गिण तोम् ।

Ch. 6. Rejecting the civic welcome of the city elders of Vaisali, the wide eyed beautiful Great One came here and purified my house ; Oh ! that ocean of Mercy !

यशोधरा

भागेश्वरी

च० विहाय मां भार्यां शिशुं तपोवनं गतो इति
नृदुःखवारणाय तं निघृणं मत्वा तदा
इहागतं न वीक्षेति धृतवृतां रूषाभृतां
महाकृपालवालो मन्मोहान् निवारितो ।

च० विजितशतकोटि भानुतेजसा विनाशयन्तं शोकभयं
राजितेन्दुवदनस्मितभासारातीन् वशीकुर्वन्तं
पूजितं पामरैर्नरेन्द्रैर्भुधजनैर्ब्रह्मादिभिरपि
याचमानं भिक्षां देवदेवं कथं वर्णये ।
तातक तद्धिमि तनत्तकिट तक जं जं तक जं जं
तत्तक्क तकतिमितक्क तक्क त्तरिकिट जम् जम्
दिनत्तकिटतक तकजं तीं तक तरिकिट तक जं
दित्तलांगुतक दित्तलांगु तक तत्तित्तलांगु तकजम् ।

Yasodhara

Bhageswari

Ch. 7. He left me, his wife and child for penance in the forest to ward off human misery—and I considered him

heartless ; I was adamant I won't see him here, so filled with bitterness I was. But with infinite mercy, he removed my misery.

Ch. 8. Him, who destroys fear in the world by his light like a billion suns, who bewitches enemies by his shining smiling face, who is worshipped by laymen, learned men, Kings and even Gods, (but) who begs for alms—how can I describe that God among gods !

अस्मिन् समये तत्रागतो उपाली एतत्सर्वं श्रुत्वा कथयति ।

जोन्पुरी **आदि**

प० श्रुत्वा कथनं सर्वं तदा मत्वा मनसि पुनः पुनरद्यापि वक्ष्ये तर्कांकित
तत्वविचारं मुख्यतरमिति

अ० अद्यैव पश्याम्यद्भुतदृष्ट्या अमितप्रभावं परमोन्नतिं (च)
अतुल्यकीर्तिवर्षमहमार्यदेशोन्नतिं चापि पश्याम्यहम् ।

च० दिन्नागनागार्जुनवसुबंधुदिव्याद्भुततर्कविचारणम्
दीर्घदृष्या पश्यन् मुहरहं रोमांचितोऽस्मि हर्षोत्सुकैः
दिशासु सर्वेषु देशोन्नतिं प्रसिद्धीकृतनालंदामपि
निशायां स्वप्नेऽहं दिवादीर्घदृष्ट्या पश्यामि पश्यामि पश्याम्यहम् ।

At about that time, Upali comes there and listens and says.

Jonpuri *Adi*

P. Hearing all you said and thinking it over again, I still say that rationality and logic are more important.

A. I see with my long sight, the great power, influence, unlimited glory and the rise in influence of India (through Buddhist Logic).

Ch. I see with my mind's eye, the great logical discussions of Dinnaga, Nagarjuna and Vasubandhu again and again and I am thrilled and overjoyed ; I see again and again with my long sight, the Nalanda University spreading India's Glory in all the four corners of the world—in dreams at night and by day.

अथ गौतमी च दीर्घदर्शनावस्थां प्राप्य कथयति ।

कापि **आदि**

प० करुणावर्षादन्यथाकृत वेदमार्गं पश्यामि
अरुणोदयसमयैव पश्याम्यधुना मित्रप्रभावम् ।

च० करुणावर्षात् अहिंसायां प्रकटीभवति प्रभावम्
करुणावर्षात् मृगहत्तिपरयज्ञविधिरबलायते
करुणावर्षात् भारतदेशे वर्धते मैत्री च हर्षो
करुणावर्षात् अवतरते मुहुर्भगवान् हरिः भुवौ ।

Then Gautami also gets into a trance, seeing visions of the future and says.

Kapi *Adi*

P. I see the Vedamarga changing by this rain of mercy, as if I see the power of the sun even before day break.

Ch. By this rain of mercy, the greatness of non-violence is proclaimed.

By this rain of mercy, the practice of sacrificing animals becomes weak.

By this rain of mercy, friendship and joy increase in India.

By this rain of mercy, Lord Hari incarnates on earth often.

सर्वे तदा मंगलतिल्लानं नृत्यन्ति

गौलीबन्धु **आदि**

तनत्तकिटतक तनत्तकिटतक ताना तेंदाना
तत्तरिकिटकिट तनत्तकिटकिट तन्ना तिल्लाना

पुनः पुनर्गीयतां शरणत्रयं बुधैः
भुवनत्रयं प्रकाशयतु बौद्धधम्मविजयकीर्तिः
पुनः पुनर्भवतु भारते पुण्यश्लोकाः अनेकाः
आतनोतु तथागतो सदा शान्तिम, परं शिवम् ।

All together sing a Mangala Tillana.

Rythm words

Gaulipantu *Adi*

Let the three Saranas be sung by wise men again and again ;

Let the fame of Buddha Dhamma shine forth in all the three worlds ;

Let many great men be born again and again in India ;

Let Thatagata spread peace and goodness always.

APPENDIX I

SUMMARY OF PUBLICATIONS AND STAGINGS OF SUBRAMANIAM'S DANCE DRAMAS AND PRESS REVIEWS

I would like to indulge in a brief stock-taking of my creative work and its impact in terms of publications and the stagings of my dance dramas including also the presentation of my songs in concerts. The following is a consolidated summary of these.

Publications Relased at Functions

I. *1. Pancha Kanya Tarangini*, September 1975

Book of five dance dramas in Sanskrit on five women in Buddha's life : released by Sangita Kalanidhi Dr. Ananta Krishna Sarma under the presidentship of Education Minister Mallikarjunaswamy in Bangalore.

II. 2. A book of 15 notated compositions titled *Buddhan Pugalisai.*

3. A book of 5 dance dramas in Tamil titled *Vazhi Vazhi Vandan Vazhi* both released by Justice Maharajan with Mr. S. Gautamadasa, the Deputy High Commissioner for Sri Lanka as the guest of honour in Madras in September 1978.

III. 4. *Veera Kanya Vahini,* Book of 4 dance dramas on four great women who influenced four great men to spread

Buddhism—released on February 11th, 1981 by the Secretary of the Madras Music Academy at the Mylapore Fine Arts Society.

IV. 5. *Kinkini mala*, (the present work) with four dance dramas on Buddhist themes and some critical essays.

Stagings

Ambapali (Sanskrit) first staged in December 1966 at Bharatiya Vidya Bhavan Theatre Bombay—by Ritha Devi, and staged a few times later in other cities.

Ambapali (Sanskrit) staged in May 1978 at the Canadian Asian Studies Conference, Guelph University, Canada—by Sudha Sekhar, and a few times later elsewhere in North America.

Ambapali (Tamil) staged in Madras in December 1975 by Jayadevi and about fifty times thereafter in several Indian cities—and staged before the Acting President of India, Mr. Jatti.

Maya (Sanskrit) staged many times by Komala Varadan in Delhi, Bombay, Bangalore and several other Indian cities and staged as a grand ballet in Ottawa at Carleton University, Theatre in November 1981, by Asha, Pavitra, Gita, Chari and others and again for the annual meeting of the Canadian Asian Studies Association in May 1982.

Sujata (Sanskrit) staged in parts by Vasantalakshmi in Madras in 1975 and in full by Sudha Sekar in April 1979 at the *American Oriental Society's* Annual Conference in St. Louis, Missouri, U.S.A. and in several places later.

Yasodhara (Tamil) staged at Carleton University, Ottawa under the auspices of the Asian Studies Committee by Kalpalatha in June 1979 and a few times later.

Sanghamitra (Sanskrit) excerpts staged in April 1976 at the National Arts Centre, Ottawa, and in Toronto, Peterborough and other North American cities by the *Dhananjayans*.

Sanghamitra full Indian premiere at Academy Hall, Madras, for Narada Gana Sabha, February 6th, 1981 and several time later, in Madras and other places, by the *Dhananjayans*.

Manimekhalai (Tamil) excerpts staged by *Narasimhachary* and *Vasantalakshmi* in September 1978 at release function II above.

Scenes from 'Parimala Madhaveeyam' from *Kinkinimala* staged by Komala Varadan in New Delhi, Karnataka Bhawan in October 1982 ; 'Angulimala' and 'Mahakanya' also from *Kinkinimala* staged on 8th January 1983 in Theatre A, Carleton University, Ottawa.

Musical Concerts

Gautama Ganarchana 1. A concert of Subramaniam's compositions by eight artists in 1973 April in Lusaka, Zambia.

Gautama Ganarchana 2. 1975 September.

Hema Sampath gave a full concert of Subramaniam's compositions in Bangalore on the occasion of the release of *Pancha Kanya Tarangini* by Dr. Ananta Krishna Sarma.

Gautama Ganarchana 3. In September 1978, Narasimhachary and Hema Sampath sang Professor's songs at the release ceremony in Madras.

Gautama Ganarchana 4. Harikatha of "Buddha Charitam" by Prof. V. Subramaniam, at the Indian Fine Arts Society's 49th Musical Festival, Madras 28th December 1981, using his compositions.

Gautama Ganarchana 5. Presentation of Subramaniam's compositions by Hema Sampath at the Madras Music Academy 30th December 1981.

In short eight of my thirteen dance dramas have been staged and some of them many times so that the total number of stagings and concerts is well over the century mark. This is really heartening and I have every hope of more stagings and of making some impact in Sri Lanka and South East Asia. Of

course, I realize that I am still very far away from my ideal of one song on Buddha in every concert and one dance item on Buddha in every dance performance.

Reviews

I am also heartened by the showers of appreciation, I have received in person from connoisseurs and from art critics in the press. Of the spate of press reviews from newspapers in India, North America and South East Asia, I reproduce just a few because of their relevance.

1. *Rita's panorama has vigour, beauty*

—by our Dance Reviewer

Rita Devi presented for the first time in Bombay, a solo dance drama entitled "Amba Pali" in the three classical styles, Bharata Natyam, Kuchipudi and Odissi. The composition was a gem of artistic creation by Dr. Subramaniam, rich in its wealth of poetic imagery, so noble and elevating in its theme and so soul-filling in the melodic resonance of its language.

Rita Devi succeeded in reproducing in visible form all the beauty of the composition by selection of appropriate style of dance, Ragas and Thirumanams for the various scenes. The differing moods of Amba, initially proud and voluptuous, thereafter joyful in the victory over the Buddha and the final surrender to the Lord, were skilfully reproduced by Rita.

Indian Express, Bombay, Dec. 7, 1966. (on the occasion of the first performance of my first dance drama).

Bold Experiment on New Theme

The themes of our musical compositions are mostly an adoration or address of the various gods and goddesses in the Hindu pantheon. Rarely do we come across the Jain or Buddhist celestial figures in our music. In this light the compositions of Prof. V. Subramaniam provided an interesting contrast and rare experience when some of them were presented at the Indian Institute of World Culture.

Prof. Subramaniam is a Political Scientist by avocation, but an aesthete at heart. He has composed five dance dramas all relating to the Buddhist lore. Entitled '**Pancha Kanya Tarangini**' they relate to the confrontation of five women—Mayadevi, Mayaprajavati, Yasodhara, Sujata and Ambapali—with the Buddha during his lifetime. These dance dramas contain numerous compositions and eight of them were sung by Hema Sampath occasionally joined by the composer himself. They were supported by S. Chandrasekhar and V. S. Rajagopal on the violin and mridangam respectively. At the end, a scene from another dance drama of Subramaniam—*Sanghamitra* was also presented.

Noteworthy feature of these compositions including two Tillanams and set in Karnatic ragas like Hamsadhvani, Kalyani and Desiya ragas like Bhimpalas, Desh and so on was that each section or charanam had an enlivening twist in its structure. The tunes had an accuracy of form while the metrical rhyme of the words and the musical rhythm seemed to perfectly complement each other. And it was necessary that all the charanams had to be heard to appreciate the overall beauty of the composition. The compositions in Kalyani, Bhimpalas and the Tillanams spring to mind in this context.

U. S. Krishna Rao and his disciple Sheila Rao presented a short dance number from '*Sanghamitra*'. It related to the confrontation of Ashoka and his daughter Sanghamitra and his subsequent conversion to non-violence and Buddhism as a result of her rebuke.

Dr. R. Anantakrishna Sarma spoke about the important features of these dance dramas and the compositions presented and Mr. M. Mallikarjunaswamy, Minister for Education, released the book '*Pancha Kanya Tarangini*'. Prof. Subramaniam proposed a vote of thanks.

—Murali

Deccan Herald, Bangalore 4th Sep. 1975.

Enlightenment Before the Footlights

Asia Week, *Hongkong September 25, 1981*

Had it not been for his son, Prof. V. Subramaniam may never have thought of it. It was during an overseas university stint in Australia that the South Indian-born political science lecturer realised that all the classical Sanskrit music he was teaching his boy, Gautam, revolved about gods and heroes from Hindu mythology. Every *kriti* (traditional set piece from a *raga*) he sang celebrated such figures as Rama, Krishna or Shiva. "At the same time," Subramaniam recalls, "I was deeply committed to Buddha—the man, the prophet and philosopher." One day Gautam asked his father why he never sang kritis about the Buddha. "When I explained that I knew of none and perhaps there was none, he suggested : 'Then why don't you make up some yourself ?' "

That was in 1965. Today, the 60-year-old Subramaniam, who now teaches at Canada's Carleton University of Ottawa, can boast a string of original dance-dramas that have been staged on three continents and may just be the first musical compositions about the Buddha in nearly nineteen centuries. On a recent visit to Singapore, the part-time composer admitted to *Asia Week's* Jagjit Kaur Nagpal that at first he was wary about taking up his son's challenge. Satisfying the artistic standards of Carnatic (South Indian) music was one thing ; dramatising Buddhist legends, which lack the blood-and-thunder plots of Hinduism, seemed more difficult. "Once you take a Buddhist theme, the Buddha himself does not come on stage," he explains. "He is an influence in the background."

Luckily, Subramaniam notes, there are a number of peripheral characters from Buddhist lore whose stories feature all nine emotions required of classical Indian dance plus the dramatic conflict needed for a good tale. Even so, poetic licence is often invoked. "I take the original story, twist it, add and subtract and make it danceable," he says, "because unless you take liberties in technique you cannot be fully creative." At the start, Subramaniam focussed on five women who figured in the life of Siddhartha Gautama, the Buddha, including Maya, his mother ; Yasodhara, the bride whom he abandoned to seek en-

lightenment, and Ambapali, a beautiful courtesan who renounced her jealousies to enter the *Sangha*, or monastic order.

In fact, it was *Ambapali*, Subramaniam's first composition, which gave him the encouragement to continue. The piece was taken up by Rita Devi, a well-known Indian dancer and grand-niece of the Nobel Prize-winning Bengali poet, Rabindranath Tagore, who staged it at Bombay's Bharatiya Vidya Bhavan Theatre in 1966. "If my first work had taken a long time to get recognition, then it would have been difficult," he says. "But that was a spur for me to keep on composing." Since that first break, his dances have been performed in the U.S., Canada and Europe. "I belong to a small minority," the ex-patriate professor explains. "Abroad my art has definitely made an impact in Oriental circles in America and Western Europe. But Southeast Asia is where I want to make a bigger hit than I have done in India or the States."

But why should a political scientist, whose speciality has been documenting the role of elite classes in public administration, take on such an exotic, not to say demanding, sideline ? One reason is that Subramaniam, born into a Brahmin family in the State of Tamil Nadu, learned classical Sanskrit literature at the knee of his grandmother, "a first-rate scholar." As a boy, he was towed to philosophical discourses and eavesdropped on his sister's musical training, which is compulsory for highborn girls in India. At the University of Madras he studied chemistry but soon switched to political science. Since then, he has taught at universities and trained government personnel on five continents, including posts in Britain, France, Germany and Zambia, where he stayed seven years until the African university's political science department was "Zambianised."

It was in his mid-twenties when he was teaching in Sri Lanka (then Ceylon), however, that Subramaniam became a convert to Buddhism, thanks to what he saw as its "compassion, tolerance and rationality." After his son posed the fateful question, the professor began some lengthy research into the puzzler of why so little music about Buddhism existed. His

conclusion : during Buddhism's first millennium, when it flourished in India under the patronage of such rulers as the emperors Ashoka and Kanishka (reigned circa 265-238 B.C. and 78-103 A.D., respectively), almost all musical themes were secular. There was one Buddhist musical drama, *Soundarananda*, written and staged by the composer Aswagosha during Kanishka's reign. But towards the 6th and 7th Centuries A.D., when religion was beginning to pervade music, Buddhism in India was on its way out.

Now, Subramaniam is struggling to compensate for that loss. Besides a scholarly book (*The Sacred and the Secular in India's Performing Arts*), he has published two books of dance-dramas in Sanskrit and Tamil and his third, *Kinkini Mala*, was released two months ago. Between his regular career and avocation, his "hurry, hurry life," as he puts it, keeps him jetting from one part of the globe to another. "A good number of my compositions are literally done in the air : I just take a pen and serviette and jot down," he says. But whether he is writing about Sanghamitra, Ashoka's daughter, of Rajya Sri, sister of Emperor Harsha, Subramaniam says he gets "enormous satisfaction" from his work. "Before I started writing, Buddha was nowhere on the concert platform and on the dance stage very occasionally would get a half-minute," he points out. "Now I have broken through that wall and put Buddhist themes on stage. I made a beginning."

Asia Week, Hong Kong, Sept. 25, 1981.

These reviews speak for themselves about the impact of my work. There are several more in Tamil and Kannada. I should also add that more recently *Kalki* and *Amudha Surabhi*, both well known Tamil Weeklies from Madras have published special feature articles with pictures of my dance drama, "Sanghamitra" for their special Deepavali issues in 1981. The Press Trust of India too has treated my publications seriously by sending out news about them. Such warm appreciation has encouraged me to press on with my uphill task of putting Buddhist themes on the stage and concert platform.

APPENDIX II

BUDDHIST DILEMMAS INHERITED BY HINDUISM

The general legacy of Buddhism in Hindu religion, philosophy and culture has been discussed several times by competent scholars as well as popular writers. We all know about the great debt of Sankara and his Advaitic philosophy to Buddhist logic and philosophy. His Paramaguru Gaudapada derived ideas heavily from Buddhism, which he openly acknowledged in two invocatory verses to Buddha in his *Mandukya Karika.* Sankara, in addition to his considerable reliance on the Karika, used the logic developed by Buddhists to the full. His critics did not spare him for such reliance and nicknamed him crypto-Buddhist—an appellation which occurs in different ways from the Padmapurana onwards down to Vedanta Desika's works. Vaishnavism in spite of some aversion to Sankara's Advaita, learnt much from Buddhist ideas of Avatara and in particular, Vishnu's incarnations as fish, tortoise and boar derive much from the Jataka stories. Again the Bodhisatva ideal was not without its influence on Vaishnavite ideas of incarnation, Saulabhya, Vatsalya, and Tvara. Indeed the Hindu and Buddhist ideas influenced each other continuously so much that it is difficult to distinguish between borrower and lender. The earlier Buddhist ideas of self-governing monkish orders, were revived and modified by Sankara in establishing his Dasanamis or ten orders of monks.

In art, the Buddhist heritage is clearest in sculpture and least clear and perhaps negative in music and dance. The birth of a uniquely Indian—Asian sculptural idiom based on symbolism, stylization and idealization—evolved essentially as a protest against the Bactrian Greek style of realism in Gandhara sculpture within the ambit of Buddhism but its effect lasted long after the disappearance of Buddhism itself from India in Chola bronzes, in medieval sculptures and even in late Nayak statuary. There is now a realization of the importance of the evolution of the unique Indian idiom in sculpture, thanks particularly to the work of Ananda Coomaraswamy—but not quite enough. Coomaraswamy was less of a social historian and more of an aesthete. He was keen to emphasize the importance of the spiritual content of an image as a product of the sculptor's Dhyana and as an aid to Dhyana and equally keen to stress the resemblances between Christian medieval and Hindu theories of art and call to witness writers like Meister Eckhart. I doubt whether he was aware of the contemporary socio-historical work of Alois Riegl *Die Spat-Romische Kunstindustrie* 1905, Vienna, (Arts and Crafts in the late Roman Empire) wherein he analyses sociologically and even Marxistically, the reason why medieval Christian Europe 'rejected' Greek achievements in sculpture and music *i.e.* Greek humanism and realism in sculpture and the evolved system of musical notation.He attributes this, broadly to a new system of dominance by the organized Christian Church and its sociocultural manifestation in stylization and symbolism—in terms of lean emaciated saints, draped and clad Madonnas and the like. Indeed, the plastic arts underwent at least three successive changes due to socio-economic changes, from Greek humanism and realism to Christian medieval symbolism and stylization to Renaissance humanism and realism onto secularistic schools in the 19th century of Impressionism and the like. In India, however, the evolution of the Mathura Buddhist idiom left a lasting impress, mainly because I think it was a mature protest. There was no going over from Gandhara realism to medieval European emaciated saints and over-clothed Madonnas but to something fully expressive of a spiritual orientation without sacrificing form and beauty. The combination of some

sensuousness with symbolism is a unique gift of this Buddhist period which attained its full bloom in later Hindu medieval statuary and the Chola bronzes. I have argued in the 'Introduction' that in music, Buddhist influence was negative—thus driving the performing arts into the arms of the Bhakti Movement. Indeed positive prohibitions against the performing arts were pronounced by the Sangha on some occasions as in Sri Lanka in the 1300s. But even so, I suspect the acceptance of Santa as a rasa in the later centuries owed something to the left-over influence of Buddhism on Hindu culture.

All these have been discussed in some form but little has been said about the inheritance of two unresolved dilemmas from Buddhism and Hindu techniques of containing them or about the problems of national identity created by fathering a universal religion. This paper is essentially a preliminary exploration of these dilemmas present in some form in almost every religion.

The first is the basic conflict in all missionary activity between the needs of purity and specificity in doctrine and of acceptability to as wide a group as possible. The second is the related conflict between the requirements of intellectual conviction and emotional stimulation in a religion. The conflicts are solved in different ways by different religions. When rigid doctrine has to be accepted by diverse peoples of a continent with different outlooks, the solution at one end is schism as in Christianity or permitting considerable regional variations as in Buddhism and Roman Catholicism—with a vague general umbrella doctrine. After Christianity split into Protestant and Catholic wings, the latter became more accommodative to local variations after a bout of counter-reformation,—in Asia, Africa and Latin America. Buddhism did this much earlier by making concessions to all national and regional demands all over Asia, becoming thus more and more vague in regard to doctrine. This did not help it in India itself where Hinduism with an even greater flexibility absorbed it. But the dilemma of purity *versus* flexibility was inherited partly in the form of Saivism *versus* Vaishnavism. The intel-

lectual *versus* emotional dilemma of Buddhism developed essentially after the shaping of logic in Buddhist universities as Buddha's original approach was more compassionate and practical though the germ of the conflict was sown in the first Maha Sangha itself as I argue in the introduction to "Maha-kanya Sangha". The conflict was resolved in two ways, both unsatisfactory. One was to tolerate suitable emotion-satisfying practices for the majority of the laity with the monks and intellectuals appropriating philosophy and theology, another was the accommodation of both in Mahayana Buddhism with the worship of Bodhisatvas at one end and intellectual nihilism at the other end. This dilemma was reborn in Hinduism in different ways and solved differently.

The Saiva-Vaishnava differences were more acute in South India and almost absent in the North. The reasons are partly socio-psychological. Two conflicting demands have been made in every religion—for a God who was close enough to love and be loved—and a God who was Almighty and distant. In Hinduism the two ideas crystallized round Vishnu with all his avataras and Siva the distant Mahayogi. In Tamilnadu this distinction between Siva who is not 'born' like Vishnu but takes various forms to perform miracles to save his devotees—and Vishnu who is 'born' like a human being in an avatara to save his devotees—was most clearly stressed. Of course, Saivism had to stress the other side too by referring to the easy pleasability of Siva—his Tiruvilayadals, etc., just as Vaishnavism also stressed his majesty in his Viswarupa. But the broad categorizations of majesty and austerity on the one hand and approachability on the other came to be equated with Siva and Vishnu.

The early rise of the Bhakti cult in Tamilnadu, brought out the differences somewhat less sharply. The Vaishnavite saint-singers transformed the secular eroticism of Ahattinai literature and developed a mode of intense identification—as beloved of the Lord, the lover—and in other capacities. This brought the lord closest to them psychologically. The Saivite saint-poets treated the Lord more as a grand patron-king

transforming the Tamil Atruppadai tradition, though they drew from Ahattinai also, just as the Vaishnavite singers drew from Atruppadai. But these differences of degree grew into differences of kind later through two historical developments. In the first place, the Chola emperors who ruled Tamilnadu for a crucial five centuries were strong Saivites and this made Vaishnavism more of a non-imperial and democratic religion leading to some persecutions—a process partly reversed under the Nayak rulers who were Vaishnavites Hence the historical gulf between the two. In the second place, South India, free from Muslim rule and relatively free from Muslim influence needed less of the sustenance of a more democratic people's religion than North India did.

Even before Muslim domination, in North India, Vaishnavism was more wide spread—as shown by the early development of *Pancharatra.* Later historical developments strengthened its position. The Vaishnavite Bhakti cult from the South was well received in the North through the *Bhagavatha Purana* and was later reinforced by the work of Ramananda from the South. Subjection to Muslim rule made reliance on an intimate personal God more necessary—and the Vaishnavite Bhakti cult became the chief socio-psychological prop of a politically dispossessed people. But liberated proud Hindu groups had always a yearning for an austere Siva—as Dayananda's Arya Samajist revivalism clearly did.

The other dilemma of the intellectual *versus* the popular and emotional reappeared in Hinduism in different guises frequently. Sankara's solution was thinking and talking on two planes ; as between intellectuals the Absolute is nameless and formless but it becomes the Iswara on a popular level of communication between the intellectual and the people. This double-think and double-talk was helpful upto a point. But the more fundamental problem was how to relate ideas and practices at the two levels—in daily social intercourse.

Prof. M.N. Srinivas and his students have located and studied one contemporary process which does this, namely Sanskritization or the emulation of upper caste norms by

upward-mobile lower caste groups. But this is only a part of a wider dialectic between Sanskritization and its converse Prakritization each of which within itself has a dialectic. Thus Sanskritization on the one hand means the voluntary emulation of the upper castes by a lower caste ; it also includes its internal converse namely the voluntary missionary propaganda of upper groups in spreading their ideas downwards. This was what happened during the medieval period when the intellectuals spread Puranic ethics through recreating *Ramayana* and *Mahabharata* in the local languages. Similarly, Prakritization includes the voluntary adoption by the intellectuals of ideas and norms from the lower popular groups—and its internal converse of the lower groups forcing them on the upper groups by some types of emotional coercion. The rise of the Bhakti cult in Tamilnadu was essentially a process of voluntary Prakritization in the first instance. The local demand for an emotionally satisfying human relation was dominant in the Ahattinai literature of human love and the saint-singers took over this dominant idiom. Once this process of Prakritization was completed, the product Bhakti—was Sanskritized in language and spread to other parts of India. Quite often practices at the lower level could not be changed much and a compromise was arrived at of modifying that a little and let the Prakritic and Sanskritized modes exist side by side as in the case of the vegetarian and non-vegetarian mother—goddesses in Gujarat. The Mahayana-Hinayana dialectic was thus widened and diversified so as to contain it.

Thus the two basic cultural dilemmas of Buddhism have survived in Hinduism which has only contained them. Buddhism did not have to make varied efforts in its heyday as it was a successful expanding royal missionary religion. Hinduism, faced with Islam, with internal differences and later with the social and intellectual challenge of the West had to search for various methods to contain the dilemmas—to ensure survival. The lessons of Buddhist history are already incorporated in the Hindu containment of the dilemmas.

APPENDIX III

PURE DANCE AND THE DANCE DRAMA

Dance dramas of different types have gained increasing popularity in the post war decades in all schools of Indian dancing and do not need any defence but there is still some controversy about its roots in the classical tradition as well as its aesthetic value. Some traditional Bharata Natyam dancers look upon dance drama with some suspicion as an innovation diluting the rigour of classical dance[1] ; some others refer to Kathakali and Kuchipudi as 'traditional' dance drama to imply that there is no need nor propriety in authoring and staging any other dance drama in any other classical idiom and in particular in Bharata Natyam and there are still others who consider it innovative but not yet legitimized in terms of classicism or aesthetic value.[2] Hence some exploration of the ancient roots as well as the aesthetic fruits of the dance drama is worth-while in comparison with pure dance performance.

It is quite clear that the *Natya Sastra* of Bharata dealt with drama *i.e.*, Natya as an over-arching composite including dialogue, mime and rythm in dance and music as well.[3] Dance itself *i.e.*, Nritya was treated as an intimate composite of Nritta *i.e.*, rythm and Abhinaya *i.e.*, interpretation. For quite a long period, dance thus developed under the umbrella of classical drama and its recognition as an independent performing art was quite gradual. We see some sort of separa-

tion and its recognition in its own right in Kalidasa's *Malavikagnimitram* and more of it in *Silappadikaram* but it would not probably have been completed except for some socio-historical changes, namely : the transformation of the Tamil secular-erotic *Ahattinai* poetry into Nayikabhava Bhakti poety by the Tamil saint-singers, the simultaneous equation of the temple deity with a munificent patron by transmuting the *Atruppadai* genre which was later legitimised by the Agamas prescribing *Rajopachara* for the deity and the emerging practice of dedicating dancers to temple service to serve the 'King-God'. In this case, the danseuse became the actress, dancing in solo the part of the separated beloved, with the Lord as her lover. I have analysed and elaborated the above socio-historical argument elsewhere in detail and am giving it briefly later in this paper.

On the other hand, the main reason for the long association of dance and drama is based on the universal tendency for all artistic, that is, all self-expressive activity to be social, composite and diffuse in earlier periods and to diversify into specialisms much later. Even after diversification, there is a dialectic between specialisation and abstraction on the one hand and co-operative composite activity on the other. Thus singing, dancing and acting with costumes by every participant in drama gets differentiated with the allotting of separate activities to separate participants—singing to singers and dancing to dancers. This co-operation allows specialisation and dancing and singing are liberated as integral activities in themselves. But for a long while, music was a hand maid of dancing—as amply borne out by ancient texts and other historical evidence.[4] It became an art and science in its own right in the South first in the Carnatic system and much more slowly in the Hindustani system where till most recently, Ghazal and Thumri were still related to dance.[5]

This is to emphasize the point that the separate individuality of dance apart from being one of the related elements in drama was a gradual development under specific socio-historical conditions. In the beginning there was only drama incorporating both dance and music and in terms of roots in tradition, the dance-based drama is more ancient than just dance

with a musical background or accompaniment. One may go even further ; the pure Nritya tradition probably emerges only with temple dancing and the Bhakti-tradition in South India from the 5th century, and is strengthened by Raja Raja Chola's reforms in temple ritual while its modern version with an orderly succession of Alarippu, Jatiswaram, Sabdam and padam is barely two centuries old, shaped as it was by the famous Tanjore brothers from the then existing strands of dance. Indeed right in their time, the Sanskrit dance drama *Krishna Leela Tarangini* was being staged by pious Brahmin dancers—and the Tamil dance drama *Kutralakkuravanji* was being sponsored by the Tanjore Maharajah, one of whose ancestors Shaji Maharajah had produced a simpler dance drama *Pallaki Seva Prabhandam*. In other words, not only was the dance drama ancient but it was being performed right before the eyes of the Tanjore brothers even while they were perfecting the concert pattern of Bharata Natyam in the order now considered invioably sacred and traditional by some.

The reason why the Tanjore brothers concentrated their talent on perfecting their standard sequence of Alarippu to Padam may be guessed at. There was the reason of immediate socio-economic convenience and there was also a slightly tattered tradition of solo dance based on Bhakti and *Rajopachara*. Let us consider them in that order. Dance drama required a certain type of coordinated effort in a particular urban social setting while the 'Sadir' form was suitable to an individual danseuse with accompaniments to be performed before a King, in his court or a temple courtyard during a temple festival or inside a pandal for a marriage. This was possibly the sociological reason that influenced them. Along with that was the socio-economic reason that this form was best suited to ensure a regular source of income from performances in court, temple and marriage celebrations for the Devadasis whose position was then being threatened by the anarchic conditions. There is some evidence about the changing financial situation of temples in the first half of the 19th century before the East India Company started strengthening its hold on South India. But what really entrenched the work

of the Tanjore quartet later was the evolution of the new rural and semi-urban landed middle class with a penchant for expensive weddings and the later evolution of urban sabhas by the urban middle classes. Neither of these cared much about the dance drama tradition and both wanted to savour discrete items instead of a single dance drama.

The Tanjore quartet's codification was also based on the continuing influence of the Aham-Bhakti combination which issued in the Bhakti romanticism of the Alwars and the courtly romantic poetry of *Muthollayiram* and *Nandikkalambagam*. I have discussed in detail elsewhere this evolution and also the evolution of *Rajopachara* from a combination of the Tamil Aham-Atruppadai traditions and Agamic prescriptions.[6]

To cut that long story short, the basic element of Sangam literature namely its *Ahattinai* or secular romanticism with its elaborate conventions was taken over mainly by the (Vaishnavite Saints) Alwars identifying as the love-lorn beloveds of the Lord and all the sensuousness of Aham poetry was absorbed into Bhakti poetry, with the Lord as a divine and royal lover. At the same time the (Saivite saints) Nayanars took over the Sangam *Atruppadai* tradition of singing about the valour and generosity of a chieftain or King and the beauty of the landscape round his castle—and applied it to the deity in a temple as king. A combination of these two traditions—along with the Agamas coming down from the North, finally shaped by the 10th century, the *Rajopachara* conventions of the South Indian temple which have sustained classical dance and music for centuries. Without going into details, this convention equates deity and king for artistic purposes and invites and encourages sensuous poetry on either. Thus the simultaneous rise of decadent royal romantic poetry in *Muthollayiram* along with Bhakti poetry was no accident. The later rise of Kshetriya padams and the "Varnam" are all in the direct line of the Tamil evolution of *Rajopachara.* The Tanjore quartet took over the various conventional items associated with it such as padam and jatiswaram and virtually recreated the Varnam and put together the dance 'paddati' considered sacred by a doyen like Balasaraswati. In putting all this together, they

were partly revitalizing the mediaeval Tamil tradition of Rajopachara *for the stage* without perhaps knowing its historical origins—and were of course partly influenced by contemporary socio-economic conditions.

The Tanjore brothers also seem to have realized the aesthetic choices involved. With a single danseuse, a Varnam starting with Srungara as the Sthayi bhava could include all the other Rasas as Sancharis. It is "natural" for a love-lorn lady to describe the Vira of her lover, the Bhaya of his enemies and express Bhibatsa and Hasya against his critics. One cannot start with any other Rasa and naturally slide off to the others—a truth discovered by the Alwars centuries ago. A dance drama, on the other hand, ascribes a pradhana rasa for each character and brings them out better by concentration but it is more expensive in human resources and organization.

The Tanjore Paddhati served a very useful purpose for about a century in keeping classical dance alive in the marriages of the rural rich and in the new middle class urban Sabhas but to ascribe to it the sacredness of a hoary tradition is stretching it too far. At best it reshaped some elements of an older *Rajopachara* tradition. At worst, it is no more than a manufactured tradition with a convenient explanation based on the various steps in entering a temple. Such an explanation is given about the Carnatic music concert also, starting with a Varnam and going through kritis to the Pallavi and lighter items, little realizing that this pattern is a rather late convention put together essentially by Madurai Pushpavanam and Ariyakkudi Ramanuja Iyengar. This type of reading history backwards to manufacture a tradition has been fairly common in India for centuries. It is made feasible first by the comparative lack of any sense of recorded history which the highly perceptive Alberuni noted and commented on centuries ago and secondly through sectional loyalties and conventions with disregard to overall Indian developments. It served a good purpose when it was used to sell a desirable change as ancient but it buttressed sectional selfishsness when an emerging convention was sought to be painted as hoary and inviolable.

The pattern set by the Tanjore quartet can thus be justified as a product of the then emerging socio-historical conditions and as an instrument which preserved the core of the art during a difficult period of ill-conceived reformatory zeal early in this century. But to set it up as the sole tradition or even the best tradition is to lose all sense of cultural history. We have shown that the dance drama tradition was an earlier one flowing right from Bharata's *Natyasastra* and the solo tradition grew up later through differentiation and through the Bhakti cult and both traditions had coexisted for centuries. The dance drama tradition seems to have had more literary continuity from Jayadeva on to Trikutaraja Kavi but the solo tradition was regionalized and its patterns and conventions were less recorded and were passed on more through practical instruction and induction. The dance drama tradition flourished more under one set of socio-historical conditions when the performing arts were composite as in the early centuries or when they were intensely socialized as in the case of Kathakali in Kerala or in connection with some new wave of creativity as in the case of *Gita Govindam* or *Krishna Leela Tarangini* or *Kutralakkuravanji*. It is in for a new period of serious development as the socio-economic conditions for it seem to be ripe. An indication of this is the change appearing in conventional Bharata Natyam performances where a sentence in a padam is often the occasion for branching off into enacting a full story in dramatic fashion. I have noticed how one line about Krishna saving Draupadi in a Devarnama drives the danseuse into interpreting the whole *Mahabharata* story of playing dice onto Vastrapaharana through monoacting. Even in Varnams a lot more of mono acting is creeping in through increased emphasis on Sanchari Bhavas.

The rise of the dance drama need not and should not lower professional standards at all. In any prose or verse drama or dance drama, one or two characters dominate and a top dancer gets nearly as much opportunity to show her form through that as an solo dance. Secondly, there can be as much room for pure rythm or Nrutta in a dance drama as in

a solo performance but this depends on how it is interwoven into the body of dance drama through the text and through a skilful director. The best practical evidence of the possibility of maintaining high professional standards is the success with which Smt. Rukmini Devi of Kalakshetra has done it over quarter of a century with a number of dance dramas.

One notices three types of dance dramas in India now. There are quite a few of these with only background instrumental music trying to tell a story. In trying to imitate the Western ballet technique and add it to the Indian Classical idiom, they have failed both in terms of Western and Indian classical standards. Quite apart from any professional incompetence, the two cannot be married. Indian dance is conceptual and analytical exactly like a written grammatical language while Western ballet is essentially integral and heiroglyphic in terms of communication. This short essay is not the place to develop this distinction fully.

Rukmini Devi has generally followed the Indian idiom but has adapted old Indian classics like *Kumara Sambhavam* or *Valmiki Ramayanam* for creating dance dramas. To a considerable extent the use of classical Kavyas has been successful in that they were written in a dramatic frame of mind and their poetic content is superb. But there are two basic difficulties in adaptation ; good poetry has some basic musical qualities but its prosody is different from that of musical composition—and even the work of giants like Tiger Varadachariar and Mysore Vasudevachar to set it to music just about makes up for it and just tides over the difficulty. A more fundamental comment is that this dependence on ancient sources and texts will not promote real creativity in terms of original dance dramas written for dance and for the stage.

I claim humbly to do just that. I have been somewhat fortunate in that most of Buddhist literature is philosophical and there are not many adaptable Kavyas bar Aswagosha's *Buddha Charita.* Even that is less adaptable than *Ramayanam* or *Kumara Sambhavam.* As such, I am free to take on a well

known or less known Buddhist theme or story and use my creativity without any inhibition whatever. I have already explained in the Introduction my technique and experiences and I can only hope that their success will place the dance drama at the top of the classical performing arts.

NOTES

1. Dr. T. Balasarswati, "Bharata Natyam" in V. Subramaniam (ed) *The Sacred and the Secular in India's performing Arts*, Ashish Publishing House, New Delhi, 1981.
2. Several art critics in the *Illustrated Weekly of India* over the last decade have suggested this.
3. Bharata's *Natya Sastra*, Calcutta University edition : see also V.K. Chari, "The Rasa Theory : Theology or Aesthetics" in V. Subramaniam, *op. cit.*, Padma Subramaniam's researches and explanations also stress the composite nature of Natya.
4. Jaideva Singh, "The Evolution of the Thumri" in V. Subramaniam *op. cit.*
5. *Ibid.*
6. V. Subramaniam, "The King-God Concept and the Arts" in V. Subramaniam *op. cit.*, See also V. Subramaniam, *Cultural Integration in India*, Ashish Publishing House, New Delhi, 1978 Chapter 3 "The Genesis of Bhakti".